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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
LIVES  
OF

ABEILLARD and HELOISA;

*COMPRISING A PERIOD OF EIGHTY - FOUR YEARS,*

From 1079 to 1163.

WITH THEIR GENUINE  
LETTERS,  
FROM THE COLLECTION OF AMBOISE.

By the Rev. JOSEPH BERINGTON.

A NEW EDITION.

VOLUME II.

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# C O N T E N T S

O F T H E

## S E C O N D V O L U M E.

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### B O O K V.

*He writes the story of his own life — State of the Paraclet — Abeillard's memoirs fall into the hands of Heloisa — She writes her first letter — Abeillard's answer — Heloisa's second letter — Abeillard's reply — Mr. Pope's Heloisa — Heloisa's third letter — Abeillard's answer — Other works of Abeillard — St. Bernard visits the Paraclet.*

PAGE 1 — 76

### B O O K VI.

*William of St. Thierry accuses Abeillard — The abbot of Clairvaux engages in the quarrel — The council of Sens — Sentence against Abeillard — He sets out for Rome — Is entertained at Cluni, and consents to remain there — Arnold of Brescia — Tanchelm of Antwerp — Henry de Bruys.*

PAGE 77 — 136

## BOOK VII.

*Abeillard writes two apologies—His life at Cluni—  
 He falls sick—And dies at St. Marcellus—His  
 character—The abbot of Cluni writes an account  
 of his death to Heloisa—She requests his body,  
 and obtains it—Writes to Peter the venerable—  
 His answer—Innocent II.—Eugenius III.—  
 Adrian IV.—State of England—State of France—  
 The second crusade—Death and character of  
 Suger—of Bernard—of Peter the venerable—  
 Heloisa—Her death. PAGE 137 — 232*

*The Letters of Abeillard and Heloisa. PAGE 233 — 363*



T H E  
H I S T O R Y  
O F T H E L I V E S O F  
A B E I L L A R D    a n d    H E L O I S A .

B O O K    V .

*Abeillard writes the story of his own life—State of the Paraclet—Abeillard's memoirs fall into the hands of Heloisa—She writes her first letter—Abeillard's answer—Heloisa's second letter—Abeillard's reply—Mr. Pope's Heloisa.—Heloisa's third letter—Abeillard's answer Other works of Abeillard—St. Bernard visits the Paraclet.*

Anno, 1134.

**I**T is some alleviation to the sufferer, when he knows that he is not alone in misery.—Forlorn, as I described it, was the condition of Abeillard at St. Gildas, nor did he see any end to his sufferings. Drawing some consolation from study, but more from religion, with difficulty he wore away the heavy hours. Thus pensive and sad he was, deeming himself the most wretched of men, when

B O O K  
V .

Abeillard  
writes the  
story of his  
own life.

VOL. II.

B

BOOK a letter was brought him, written by a friend,  
V. whom he had left behind him in the neighbourhood of the Paraclet. This friend, whose name or condition is not recorded, had long lived in habits of great intimacy with Abeillard<sup>1</sup>. Perhaps he was the man who accompanied him, as has been related, into the desert, and who was his companion, when together they began to cultivate that inhospitable spot. Some great misfortune had befallen him, and he was deep in distress, when, to beg advice and comfort, he wrote to Abeillard.

The abbot read the letter, and he lamented the hard fate of his friend. But, as I have just observed, there was still some comfort in the reflection, that he had now a partner in affliction. To remove the load, as well as he was able, from his friend's shoulders, he was most willing; and he would pour balm into his wounds, if he could. They can feel most for others, who themselves have suffered most. He considered by what method he could best administer consolation; but when again he reviewed his friend's narration, and the recollection of his own calamities had due time to operate, the tale, that at first affected him, vanished into air, and he saw nothing round him but the dark cloud of his own misfortunes. What then,

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Calam.

he thought, could so efficaciously answer his friend's request, as minutely to detail the events of a life, which was but a chequered scene of misery? With it he would compare his own, and from the comparison derive the happiness he wanted—He had also, in this undertaking, a more selfish object in view: it was to enjoy pleasure, which the unfortunate feel in relating their own story; and when accumulated before him he should behold the whole tissue of past events, possibly present evils might appear more supportable. What the particular distresses of his friend were, he does not say: intent on himself, he shut his eyes on all the world besides. I have before had occasion to remark that, selfishness was a very leading trait in the character of Abeillard.

He compiled therefore the memoirs of his own life.—It is unnecessary I should say much on this celebrated tract: the preceding history is faithfully extracted from it, which shows what are its contents. The work is not ill-written, though it possesses few marks of genius, and less of elegance. The age indeed was barbarous; nor can it be, in such circumstances, that the most splendid talents will ever rise above a certain level. Were the thing possible, what subject was ever better formed to call abilities into action? Not a single event does he relate, of which he is not himself the hero. Yet he is sometimes uninteresting, and



BOOK

V.

often tedious, entering on discussions which have little weight, and resuming arguments which are not of a nature to convince. His portraits are generally caricatured, and his representations of events are evidently overcharged. This we may pardon in a man, who so often had suffered unjustly.—I am surprised that his language is not more pure. He quotes the best Roman writers: he had read Cicero; Seneca is his favorite; and with Virgil, Ovid, and Lucan, he seems to have been familiar. Among the fathers of the church, Jerom, who has been styled the christian Tully, was his admired author: him he had perused with avidity, because, besides his language which charmed him, he discovered in his life many events, which resembled his own, and from his character and deportment he could draw some lessons of comfort. — But with all their imperfections, these memoirs of Abeillard are valuable, and they are read with pleasure.—Having completed the work, he sent it to his friend.

State of the  
Paraclet.

Since Abeillard had taken his last leave of the Paraclet, which was about four or five years, it had greatly prospered. The number of religious was much increased, and wealth had increased with their numbers. The fame of Heloisa was widely spread; and many ladies of distinction petitioned for admittance into her convent: the

fortunes they carried with them were considerable<sup>2</sup>. To secure their extensive property, and to procure such privileges, as were deemed most expedient, Heloisa applied to Rome. The same Innocent, whom I have already mentioned, was then pope. He graciously acceded to the petition, and addressed to them a bull, wherein, after having taken the monastery of the Paraclet under the protection of the apostolic see, he declares that all their possessions, as well such as they then occupied, as what might hereafter, by lawful means, fall into their hands, should remain to them, secure and unimpaired, for ever.—Should any one dare to infringe this solemn decree, he denounces against him the severest censures<sup>3</sup>.—By another brief, the same pontiff forbids the bishop or any person whatever, to molest the nuns in the free choice of their abbesses, or to interfere in any of their concerns; he ordains moreover, that, on no occasion, they should be obliged to quit their convent, not even when their abbess was to be blessed, but that the ceremony should be performed within their own walls<sup>4</sup>.—A good priest, named Gundricus, about the same time, gave to the Paraclet an estate, to which he had succeeded; and this grant also was confirmed to them by the Roman pontiff.

B O O K  
V.

<sup>2</sup> Vie d'Abeil. vol. ii. p. 20. <sup>3</sup> Abeil. Op. p. 346. <sup>4</sup> Ibid.

## BOOK

## V.

Thus did fortune shower down her gifts on the Paraclet; but Heloisa was the favorite child that attracted her partial notice. The lovely abbess had indeed reason to be satisfied with her situation. Every day, fresh success seemed to attend her endeavours: she was prosperous without doors, and within the walls of her convent, harmony, happiness, piety, and religious discipline, uniting in sacred concord, diffused joy over every countenance, and peace into every cell. Agnes, the niece of the abbot of St. Gildas, was her prioress, and in her she reposed the principal administration of their internal economy<sup>5</sup>. Thus she was more at liberty to pursue her favorite occupations of study and sequestered meditation. The management of their temporal affairs was in the hands of proper agents. — The prompt acquiescence which Rome showed to her petitions, demonstrated the high opinion entertained of her merit, and the circumstance doubtless was flattering to herself.

So admired, so honored, so beloved, if Heloisa was not happy, we must look for the cause in some untowardness of disposition, or rather in a natural reluctance, which her mind seemed to bear towards the confinement of a cloistered life. But this is conjectural: we have no reason to say that she was not happy. Abeillard, indeed, had deserted

<sup>5</sup> Vie d'Abeil. p. 20.



the Paraclet; but the illnatured reflections of the world had compelled him to it: her good sense therefore told her that it was her duty to submit. If since that time, all correspondence had ceased between them, she could ascribe it still to a certain delicacy of character. Placed as he was at the head of an undisciplined monastery, good example, she knew; was essentially necessary in the superior. The time might come, when again she and her sisters would enjoy the happiness of his society and of his learned conversation. In this view she rested.

The letter of consolation, which Abeillard addressed to his friend, had been received. It was natural he should admire it, and should read it to others. Copies of it were taken, and the original itself circulated from hand to hand. It was at last taken to the Paraclet\*. The connexion betwixt that house and Abeillard was well known, and it was an obvious thought, that the abbess, in particular, might like to read a story, wherein she had borne some part, and the whole of which, besides being an ingenious performance, contained the history of the life of Abeillard. — Heloisa took the letter from the hand of him who brought it. The superscription at once told her by whom it was written, and she opened it with eagerness. With the same eagerness her eye ran over the

Abeillard's  
memoirs fall  
into the  
hands of  
Heloisa.

\* Ep. Helois. 1<sup>a</sup>.

BOOK contents; and soon, indeed, she felt how much  
 V. her heart was interested in the story. It was the  
 circumstantial detail of his life and adventures,  
 and of their joint loves and joint misfortunes. At  
 every line she pitied him; this was a sentiment she  
 might lawfully indulge; and as she pitied him,  
 again she began to love. — At no time, it appears,  
 can the ruling passion be so far subdued, as not  
 to be immediately re-excited, when causes are  
 applied with which its action has been strongly  
 united. — Having read the letter, she gave it back  
 to her officious friend<sup>7</sup>, and retired in confusion  
 to her cell.

We well know, for they have been faithfully  
 brought down to us, what were the thoughts  
 which now rushed into the breast of Heloise. The  
 closing passages of his letter, wherein he related  
 what he had suffered from his monks, and how  
 great the danger still was, to which he was hourly  
 exposed, dwelt heaviest on her mind. A thousand  
 times she wished it were in her power to succour  
 him; and she formed a thousand plans, as imprac-  
 ticable as they were wild. Abeillard was in Britany,  
 and she, a cloistered nun, was immured at the  
 Paraclet! To providence she could only look, and  
 on her knees, she prayed, that heaven would  
 protect him. How truly miserable had his life

<sup>7</sup> Ep. Helois. 1<sup>a</sup>.

been, and yet what mortal was ever more entitled to the smiles of fortune ! — Her recollection now returned upon the events, in which she was personally concerned. He had told them, indeed ; but was it not with some indifference ? The narration of his own immediate troubles was prolix and circumstantial ; here he was brief and rapid. Yet how much had she not loved him ; and what sacrifices had she not made to please him ! Did all this merit no return ? — This letter itself was a proof, how small was the space she occupied in his heart. A man, whom he hardly knew, requested his advice, and he had given it in a manner that was almost new and unprecedented : he had poured into his bosom all the public, and many of the private, circumstances of his life. To her, for five long years, he had not written a single line ! Was she even sure she was not erased from his memory ? — The pensive abbess indulged the sad reflection, and seemed ready to sink under it.

The pious sisterhood soon noticed that their abbess was more sad than usual : her countenance grew wan ; and she never left her cell, unless when the duties of her station compelled her to it. They were anxious to know the cause of the sudden change, and, with a pleasing confidence, they asked it of her. Heloisa told them of the letter she had read, and of the forlorn condition, in which Abeillard, their common friend and benefactor,

BOOK then was. They heard the news with trepidation,  
 V. and in all, but love, sympathized with the feelings  
 of their abbess<sup>\*</sup>. What step could be taken to  
 relieve their anxious bosoms, they knew not; but  
 unanimously they requested that something might  
 be done.

This solicitude of her sisters was very pleasing  
 to the mind of Heloisa. Again she revolved the  
 distressful train of her reflections; and soon it  
 occurred to her, that there was one expedient in  
 her power, which possibly might answer her most  
 sanguine desires. She would write to the abbot  
 of St. Gildas, praying that, without delay, he  
 would inform her of his situation; and, at the  
 same time, she would disburden her mind of some  
 other thoughts, the impression of which was very  
 painful. — But this scheme, from a word she lets  
 fall in her letter, she seems not to have executed  
 immediately. Business perhaps hindered her; or  
 it might be the tumult of her own mind, which,  
 with difficulty, could be reduced to order. — The  
 letter was, at length, completed, and she dispatch-  
 ed it into Britany.

She writes  
 her first let-  
 ter.

There is some affectation in the address of this  
 letter: she styles Abeillard, her master, her father,  
 her husband, her brother; and herself his hand-  
 maid, his daughter, his wife, his sister. The  
 language of real passion is seldom so precise. — She

<sup>\*</sup> Ep. Helois. 1<sup>a</sup>.



then tells him, that accidentally she had seen the letter, he had written to his friend, and with what ardor she had read it: she wanted comfort, and looked for it from his words; but how miserably had she been disappointed!—She recapitulates the substance of his story, and remarks how admirably he had fulfilled the promise made to his friend: but on the hearts of his daughters of the Paraclet cruel was the effect, this too faithful tale had made!—She begs him, for Christ's sake, to inform them, and that repeatedly, of each circumstance of his present dangers. “I and my sisters, continues she, are the sole remains of all your friends: let us, at least, partake of your joys and sorrows. The condolence of others is used to bring some relief to the sufferer, and a load, laid on many shoulders, is more easily supported.”—She descants on the soft intercourse and pleasing effects of letters; a method by which he may always be present with them, and of which, if Abeillard only be willing, no invidious passion or impediment, can ever bereave them.

She reminds him by what ties he is bound to the Paraclet: it was he only who had erected its oratory, and he had established its congregation: but can the young plant prosper, if it be not often watered with peculiar care? “We are women, Sir, says she, by nature weak and delicate. Thus had our society been long formed, it would still



BOOK V. “ be exposed to danger. But now, if you give us  
 “ not all your attention and all your care, how  
 “ shall we brave the storm?”—She tells him of  
 the labor he throws away on the ungrateful  
 vineyard of St. Gildas; that his admonitions are all  
 in vain; and that the treasures which he squanders  
 on his enemies, should rather be kept for those,  
 who are docile and obedient. “But I will say  
 “ nothing of others, continues she: think only how  
 “ much you owe to me. Whatever obligations  
 “ bind you to the devout part of my sex, are all  
 “ concentrated in your Heloisa.”

Now she enters on her own immediate interests,  
 and in a manner the most forcible and affecting,  
 expostulates with the ungrateful and selfish man.—  
 She speaks of his neglectful usage, when, at his  
 command, she first left the world. “Not even  
 “ then, says she, when long grief had worn me  
 “ down, did you come to see me, or even send  
 “ me one line of comfort.”—She recalls to his  
 mind the excess of her love for him; she speaks of  
 the loss she suffered when she lost him; she describes  
 the sacrifice she made of herself and of all her  
 dispositions to his will, and the disinterestedness  
 with which she made it. In a flight of romantic  
 passion she recurs to the ideas, which wildly filled  
 her breast, when in the name of *mistress* she could  
 discover so many charms, and when she would

have deemed it more eligible to be *that* to Abeillard, than to be the *wife* of Cæsar. "For  
 " the more I humbled myself before you, says  
 " she, the greater right I thought I should have to  
 " your favor; and thus also I hoped the less to  
 " injure the great reputation you had acquired."  
 These things she recapitulates to show him, what  
 pretensions she now has to expect some return.

She then reviews, with much complacency, the  
 splendid endowments and the endearing character  
 of Abeillard, which had so justly engaged her love.  
 She recounts the general admiration which follow-  
 ed him, the envy with which her own happiness  
 was contemplated, and the melancholy reverse of  
 fortune which soon ensued. That she was the  
 occasion of his misfortunes, she owns, but yet that  
she was not guilty: because it is the motive from  
which we act, and not the event of things, which  
makes us criminal: equity weighs the intention.  
 " What, at all times, were my dispositions in your  
 " regard, she says, you who knew them can only  
 " judge. To you I refer all my actions, and on  
 " your decision I rest my cause."

Again she turns to his neglectful treatment of her,  
 during the many years she resided at Argenteuil,  
 and she entreats him, if he can, to account for  
 it; or else that she must herself say, what her own  
 suspicions are. These suspicions she then declares,

BOOK  
v.

and they prove that, in spite of love, she was not blind to the failings of Abeillard. "But " how much is it my wish, proceeds Heloisa, that " your own self-love could devise some excuse, " which might ease my pain! Were I able, even " I would willingly invent some pretext, which, " to extenuate your fault, might seem to lessen the " pretensions I have to your notice."

Drawing to a conclusion, again she proposes her petition, that he would write to her; a petition, she trusts, which he will not find extravagant or difficult of execution. But if he prove so niggardly in words, what reason has she to think he will be more liberal in things of consequence? Even at this moment, she urges, she is a victim to his will; his will it was, and not religion, which called her to the cloister. If then she ceases to have merit in his eyes; vain indeed is all her labor! From God she can look for no reward, for whose sake hitherto, she confesses, she has done nothing.

She upbraids him with the circumstance of his having insisted that she should put on the veil, before he would surrender his liberty: and in that instance, she says, his mistrust of her tore her heart, and that she blushed for him. Could he have reason to mistrust her, when he knew that, at a single word, she would have accompanied him to the gates of eternal misery? "Were you less " sure of my love, continues she, you would be

“ more solicitous : but because my conduct has rendered you secure, you neglect me. Once more recollect what I have done for you, and how great is the debt you owe me.”

BOOK

V.

There was a time, she acknowledges, when the motive of her attachment might have appeared uncertain to others : it might have been the love of pleasure, or the indulgence of vanity. It could now be mistaken no longer ; for in obedience to him, she had sacrificed all her inclinations, and had reserved nothing, the hope only excepted, that by so doing she should become more perfectly his. — Then thus she concludes. — “ By that God, to whom your life is consecrated, I conjure you, give me so much of yourself as is at your disposal, that is, send me some lines of consolation. Do it with this design at least, that my mind being more at ease, I may serve God with more alacrity. When formerly the love of pleasure was your pursuit, often did I hear from you. In your songs the name of Heloise was made familiar to every tongue: it was heard in every street: the walls of every house repeated it. With how much more propriety might you now call me to God, than you did then to scenes of dissipation? Weigh your obligations, and attend to my request. A few words shall close this long epistle. — My only friend, farewell ! ”



BOOK V. The critic, the moralist, and the man of sentiment, will find much to admire in this charming letter : but it is the original they must read, and to that I refer them. — In it the philosophic abbess displays great knowledge of the human heart; she aims not to disguise her own weaknesses, and the imperfections of Abeillard, whilst she extols his virtues and blazons his endowments, she holds up before him in colors full of truth and expression. Seldom has such love as her's been so free-spoken and impartial. That his too apparent ingratitude and neglect of her should have roused her resentment, was natural; but in terms how gentle does she utter her reproaches, and how mild is the edge of her sharpest reproofs! She seems not to have written a line, which the indulgence of affection had not first retouched and fitted to its place. It may seem that she rates her own merits very highly: but they only can think it, who have not weighed her conduct: in the mind of Abeillard, at least, there could be no measure found by which to appreciate their just value. There they should have risen, in proportion to his own ingratitude, which, I fear, was incommensurable. Her request was of all things the most moderate; and when she considered with what promptness he had entered into a minute detail of his life, to satisfy the wishes of a man, he called his friend, was it much to desire a few lines



lines only, and these were to regard himself? But it seems, she suspected that even this request would hardly be complied with. BOOK  
V.

The moral tendency of some passages may be controverted. But there will soon be a better occasion of discussing this difficulty. Suffice it now to say, that she is writing in confidence to her husband and her friend; and therefore, without reserve, she lays her thoughts before him. In her instructions to the nuns of the Paraclet, very different, I suspect, would have been her language. But on no occasion does she pretend to justify the unbounded strength of passion, she once felt for Abeillard; she rather treats it as a weakness; at all events she only expresses its reality as a fact, which from him was entitled to call for some return. — In great diffidence she acknowledges how much she wants assistance and advice; humbly she confesses her unworthiness before God, for whose sake she had done nothing; and she looks to peace of mind, as the only state, in which the duties of her calling could be properly observed.

The language and composition of this letter are both admirable. There is sometimes a purity, a precision, a perspicuity, a conciseness, a nerve in her expressions, which, even in the best days of Roman latinity, would have been read with pleasure. Where she falls from classic elegance,

BOOK it is the subject, or the barbarous idiom of the  
V. age, from which the ablest scholars can never free themselves, which draws her down. Compare her writing with that of Abeillard or even of Bernard himself, and preference must be given to the female pen. — The subject she discusses with great art; her arguments are well disposed; she adduces authorities to enforce her reasoning; and she turns the object in every direction, that its whole efficacy may be felt. The interests of lovers were never in the hands of a more able advocate; and never was the breast of ingratitude searched with an address, at once so penetrating, and so indulgent. Abeillard's distresses called for indulgence; and had he not found it from the pen of Heloisa, her address to him, which I admire, would not have possessed that softness of character, which is its greatest beauty.

Broken by ill-usage as was the abbot of St. Gildas, the reader perhaps will be disposed to sympathize with his feelings, as he reads Heloisa's letter. What emotions it excited, we know not, as guardedly he seems to have concealed them: but stoic as he was, unless apathy had deadened every fibre, he must have felt its general tendency. Estranged from the world and pleasure by habit and by necessity, the ardent language of Heloisa would find no responsive motions in his heart. He might pity her; perhaps he even might smile at

her folly. But religious, prudent, pious, as he now was, it would have ill-beseemed his character, to have exhibited any symptoms of tenderness, or to have returned an answer to Heloisa, from which fuel might have been added to a flame already too fervid. As a friend it was his duty to still the rising storm; and nothing, he might judge, would more contribute to it, than language, which should breathe religious self-denial and mortification; than sentiments full of piety, of submission to the divine will, and of solicitude for the eternal welfare of his soul. So thinking, he closed Heloisa's letter, and wrote as follows.

B O O K  
V.

“ If, since our conversion from the world to God, I have not yet written, either to instruct or to console you, it was not done neglectingly; ascribe it to the high opinion I have ever entertained of your wisdom and prudence. How could I think, that she stood in need of my assistance, to whom heaven had so largely distributed its best gifts? You were able, I knew, by example, as by word, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the pusillanimous, and to admonish the luke-warm. When prioresses of Argenteuil, these duties, I remember, you used long ago to practise; and if now you give the same attention to your daughters, as you did then to your sisters, more is not requisite, and all that I could say would be of no value. But if, in

Abeillard's  
answer.

BOOK V. “ your humility , you think otherwise , and my  
 “ instructions , in the business of religion , can  
 “ avail you any thing , tell me only , on what  
 “ subjects , you would have me write , and as God  
 “ shall direct me , I will endeavour to satisfy you.”

He then thanks heaven , which had inspired the pious nuns of the Paraclet with a solicitude in regard to the dangers , to which his life was exposed , hoping that by their prayers he should thus experience the divine Protection. “ And with this view  
 “ principally , continues he , it is , that I hastened  
 “ to send you the form of prayer , which you  
 “ once so earnestly requested from me , you , my  
 “ sister , formerly dear to me in the world , but  
 “ now most dear to me in Christ. Thus may  
 “ you offer to God a constant sacrifice of prayers ,  
 “ urging him to pardon *our* great and manifold  
 “ sins , and to avert the hourly dangers which  
 “ threaten me. ”

He talks much of the powerful efficacy of prayer , which he proves from the holy scriptures , insisting particularly on the examples of wives praying for their husbands , and on the general prevalence of female supplications. He tells her how much he confides in the prayers of the nuns of the Paraclet , and in her own , to which , as her husband , he claims a peculiar right. — At the times he had formerly lived with them at the Paraclet , it was their practice , at the end of each church-service to



subjoin a prayer for their founder: he now sends them another prayer, adapted to his own perilous situation, which he requests, to prove that their charity is sincere, they will as often repeat for him, as they bend their knees before the throne of grace. It runs thus: "O God, who by thy servant didst here assemble thy handmaids in thy holy name, grant, we beseech thee, that he be protected from all adversity, and be restored safe to us thy servants!"

Having, as he trusts, secured the prayers he wanted, he goes on solemnly: "But if, by the permission of heaven, my enemies should so far prevail as to take away my life; or if, by any chance, while absent from you, I should be numbered with the dead; it is my prayer, that my body be conveyed to the Paraclet. There my daughters, rather my sisters in Christ, turning their eyes often to my tomb, will more strongly be excited to petition heaven for the repose of my soul. And indeed, to a mind penetrated with grief, and stricken by the dark view of its crimes, where can be found a resting place, at once so safe, and so full of hope, as that which, in a peculiar manner, bears the name of, and is dedicated to, the Comforter? Besides, I know not, where a christian could find a better grave, than in the society of holy women consecrated to God."



BOOK

V.

He concludes: "It is my most earnest request, that the solicitude you now too strongly feel for the preservation of my life, you will then extend to my soul. Carry into my grave the same degree of love, you showed me when alive, that is, let your suffrages for me be peculiar and incessant. — Live, and farewell: farewell, my sisters; live, but in Christ: remember Abeillard!"

The reader, whom Heloisa's romantic epistle had left animated and greatly interested in her cause, will, I know, be sadly disappointed by this cold reply. To me it is all I looked for, and it stamps indelibly the character, I had given to the man. Besides, is not the contrast pleasing, which, by lines so strong, divides the hearts of two, whom fabulous report has so often said were made for one another?—He evades very artfully the charge of ingratitude, by a complimentary excuse, which, if it did not satisfy, would, he knew, please her vanity.—His earnest request for prayer shows how much he prized his own concerns, and how much affliction had lowered the exuberance of his soul. When he dwells on its efficacy, it is a dull discussion; and when he prescribes the new form, which is daily to be recited for his safety, we see the abbot, big in his own importance, and selfish as became his dignity.

The latter part of his address is solemn and affecting; but had he thought less of himself, or more of Heloisa, never could it have fallen from his pen: he would have felt, that every word was armed with a point, far too sharp for her irritable texture. But in the dispositions, I have described, what would he not risk in the gratification of his ruling passion? He concludes in a distich, the sentiment of which is apposite, and very analogous to the general features of the piece.

On the whole, though the letter be not such, as a modern novelist would write; yet, as it came in character from Abeillard, it merits commendation: he meant it well. The event, indeed, will show, that he was not sufficiently guarded; and perhaps a less austere reply would have succeeded better.—In point of composition, it is in the style of all his other writings, harsh, inelegant, languid, and sometimes intricate. It harmonized with his mind.—We shall now see, how it was received by Heloisa.

Agitated by the workings of her imagination, she had looked with impatience for the return of her messenger. It was an anxious moment. Many times she repented, that she had said so much; her letter might offend, or it might give him pain. It occurred sometimes to her, that she had omitted things of the greatest moment, and that her long address was too trifling to merit notice. Was she

BOOK

V.

sure, the messenger would find him? He might have absconded from the pursuits of his enemies; or the fatal stroke might have been given, which was for ever to deprive her of his sight! Should he deign to answer her letter; what tidings would it bring? — In this wild uncertainty her mind was tossed, when the messenger arrived, and he brought her an answer from Abeillard.

He who has experienced that inanition of heart, which disappointment causes, when expectation has been highly raised, will best know what Heloisa felt in perusing these cold and inauspicious lines. There was not a single sentiment which met her feelings. A formal compliment, much about prayer and its efficacy, were the principal topics; and he closed this languid sermon by a cruel request, which insensibility only, or the certain prospect of dissolution, could have dictated. She hung over the heavy words; she read them to her sisters; a general consternation prevailed; they saw the assassin's knife pointed at the breast of their dearest friend; they turned their thoughts to heaven, but the prayer he had sent them, and which they now attempted to repeat, could find no utterance. Heloisa, who should have moderated this burst of intemperate wailing, only added to it by her sighs and sorrowing gestures: but in her it was not the grief of apprehension only which interested; she had other thoughts to contend

with, such as disappointment, ingratitude, suspicion, and unavailing love had raised. In this *disorder*, again she resolved to disburden her heavy mind to Abeillard. — The moment which the agitated mind chuses for the expression of its feelings, is of all the least adapted to the display of reason, and the use of temperate, congruous, and guarded language. Such compositions must ever be read with candor, and be judged with indulgence. Why I have made this remark, will soon be evident.

B O O K  
V.

The opening of this second letter is rather captious and unimportant. — Heloisa expresses a surpise that, in the very front of his last salutations Abeillard should have placed her name before his own: this, she says, was contrary to the usual style of epistolary correspondence, and even contrary to the obvious order of things.

Heloisa's second letter.

She then seizes upon those concluding lines of his letter: "But if, by the permission of heaven, my enemies should so far prevail as to take away my life, &c." and she asks with emphasis: "Oh Abeillard! how could your mind suggest such ideas; how could your hand write them? No, no; God will never so far forsake his servants, as to perpetuate our lives, when you are gone: he will not give us that kind of existence, which is ten times worse than death." She reminds him, that it will be his duty rather, who had



BOOK assembled them at the Paraclet, to celebrate their  
 V. obsequies, and to commend their souls to God. She entreats him: "In future, do, Sir, be more  
 " cautious in your expressions. Already, alas! we  
 " are wretched enough; why should you make  
 " us more so; why, before the hour, deprive us  
 " of that poor life, which we drag along with  
 " difficulty? Each day is sufficiently loaded with  
 " its own misery; and that last fatal one, covered  
 " with a robe of bitterness, will bring to each of  
 " us an ample share of sorrow."—The address is solemn and affecting.

She goes on: "You request, should your death  
 " happen whilst absent from us, that your body  
 " be conveyed to the Paraclet: thus, you think,  
 " with your image ever before us, to derive  
 " greater benefit from our prayers."—"Do you  
 " then imagine, (she exclaims in a strain of  
 " impassioned eloquence,) we can ever forget  
 " you? Or could that be a season for prayer,  
 " when general consternation shall have banished  
 " every tranquil thought: when reason shall have  
 " lost its sway, and the tongue its utterance:  
 " when the mind, in frantic rage, rebelling  
 " against its maker, shall rather seek to provoke  
 " his anger by complaints, than to assuage him  
 " by supplications?—God grant that day may be  
 " our last! If the sole mention of your death  
 " thus strike us to the heart; what would the



“ reality not do? It is our prayer to heaven, B O O K  
 “ that we may not survive you; that we may V.  
 “ never have to perform that office, which we  
 “ expect from your hands.”

Again she entreats him to be more considerate for the sake of them all; at least, that he will spare Heloisa, by refraining from all expressions which, like the shafts of death, penetrate her soul. — The succeeding lines are placid and beautiful: “ For the mind worn down by grief is a  
 “ stranger to repose; plunged in troubles, it is  
 “ little able to think on God. Will you impede  
 “ his service, to whom you have devoted our  
 “ lives? It were to be wished that every necessary  
 “ event, which brings sorrow with it, might  
 “ take place, when we expect it least: for if that  
 “ torment us, which human foresight cannot  
 “ avert, it only raises unavailing fears.” To this she applies the words of her favorite Lucan,

Sit subitum quodcumque paras; sit cæca futuri  
 Mens hominum fati! Liceat sperare timenti.

Lib. ii.

The last words of the poet, *may he that fears, still live in hope*, touched an irritable fibre, with which, in the breast of Heloisa, was too nearly associated a long series of calamitous reflections; and its motion raised a storm, which the reader, perhaps, will view with wonder.

BOOK " Hope ! cried she ; and if I lose you, what have

v. " I to hope for ? Must I remain a pilgrim here,  
 " when you, my only comfort, are gone from  
 " me ? But even in you what comfort have I, save  
 " only the thought, that still you live ? All other  
 " joys are forbidden to me : even the privilege of  
 " your company it seems is too much for *Heloisa* ! "

Having indulged this first folly of passion , she is hurried impetuously forward. — " May I then  
 " say, that heaven has been my relentless persecutor ! If you call it clemency, where is cruelty  
 " to be found ? Fortune, that savage destiny,  
 " has spent against me every arrow of her rage :  
 " she has none left to throw at others. Her quiver,  
 " was full, and she exhausted it on me : mortals  
 " have no longer cause to dread her : nor if  
 " there were a shaft left, would it find in me  
 " a spot to light on. But though bleeding at  
 " every pore, my enemy does not stay her barbarous hand : she suspends the fatal stroke, and  
 " only fears lest my wounds prove mortal. Of  
 " all the wretched I am the most forlorn and  
 " wretched ! " — With great expression she relates, how much she had been raised above the rest of her sex , and how low she had fallen ! that there was no woman of birth or fortune, that would have compared situation with her ; and that in prosperity and in adversity her life had known no measure. " My happiness

“ was unbounded, she says, so is my sorrow. B O O K  
 “ Hanging over my pitiable state, I shed the more V.  
 “ tears, when I view the magnitude of my losses;  
 “ but they redouble, when recollection tells me,  
 “ how dear that possession was, which I have lost.  
 “ To the greatest joys have succeeded the greatest  
 “ sorrows.”

Again she arraigns the ways of providence, and boldly enters on the discussion of a subject, into which the decency of modern language will not permit me to follow her. There is strength in her reasoning, but the sentiments are indelicate : passion may be pleaded as some excuse, and the manners of the age will come in to assist her justification. Modern delicacy, which sometimes borders on affectation, is no proof of innocence of character.

“ Having lowered yourself, she continues, to  
 “ raise me, and thus given dignity to myself and  
 “ all my family, what more could be expected?  
 “ All guilt was cancelled before God and man.  
 “ But why was Heloisa born to be the occasion  
 “ of so black a perfidy—!” She then proceeds to  
 show, from historical examples, how baneful has  
 ever been the influence of women on the greatest  
 men ; still drawing some consolation from the  
 reflection, that, like the women she had mentioned,  
 no intentional guilt could be imputed to her : but  
 was she sure, she says, that her many antecedent

B O O K    sins had not justly provoked the wrath of heaven?

V.    “ God then grant me power, she exclaims, to do  
 “ ample penance! May my sorrow, lengthened  
 “ out to many days, bear some proportion to  
 “ what you have suffered! It is but just, and to  
 “ it I consign my life. Thus to Abeillard, at least,  
 “ I shall make some atonement, *if I make none to*  
 “ *heaven.*”

These were the words, which opened to her view a scene, that in candor, truth, and simplicity she lays before her friend. “ I will now  
 “ disclose to you, she says, all the secret foibles of  
 “ my heart. Tell me then, can I hope to appease  
 “ the divine anger, I who, at every moment, am  
 “ charging heaven with cruelty? My murmurs  
 “ may draw on me greater vengeance: the sorrow  
 “ at least, of such a penitent, will not avert it.  
 “ But why do I talk of penitence? Whilst the mind  
 “ retains all its former attachment to sin, what  
 “ avails the external language of grief? Easy,  
 “ indeed, it is to declare one’s faults; it is easy to  
 “ put on the imposing garb of penitence: but oh  
 “ God! how hard is it to tear the mind from those  
 “ affections, which were once so dear!” — She  
 confirms these awful sentiments by the words of  
 holy Job, and she adduces the authority of Gregory  
 and Ambrose. Then she proceeds: “ So fascinating  
 “ were the pleasures we once indulged; the  
 “ thought of them cannot give me pain, nor



“ can I efface their impresson. Wherever I turn  
 “ my eyes, in all their charms, there are they  
 “ present to me. Even in my dreams the dear  
 “ phantoms hover round me.—During the pomp  
 “ of awful sacrifice, when the soul, on the wings  
 “ of prayer, should rise more pure to heaven, the  
 “ same importunate ideas haunt my wretched soul;  
 “ they occupy every avenue to my heart. When  
 “ I should grieve for what is passed, I only sigh  
 “ that the same pleasures return no more. Too  
 “ faithful has my mind been to its impressions: it  
 “ holds up before me every circumstance of our  
 “ lost connexion, when all the scenes of vanished  
 “ joys play wantonly before me. — Sometimes, I  
 “ know, the strong workings of my mind betray  
 “ themselves on my countenance; I am heard to  
 “ pronounce words, which escape unthinkingly  
 “ from me. Alas! how truly wretched is my con-  
 “ dition! To me surely may be applied those  
 “ plaintive lines of the apostle; Miserable mortal  
 “ that I am; who will free me from this body of  
 “ death?” “ Could I but add with truth! The  
 “ grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Such is this plaintive lamentation of Heloisa,  
 which has often been so unfairly represented. It is  
 not the shameless declaration of an abandoned  
 nun, voluntarily lost in obscenity, and glorying in  
 the state; but it is the ingenuous confession  
 which a penitent, sorrowing in her mind, makes



BOOK

V.

to her husband, her friend, and her guide. Surprised we may be, that time, retirement, application, business, religion, had not erased the impressions from her soul; but this does but prove, how ardent her imagination, and how retentive her recollection was. There are minds of an extraordinary organization; and such was that of *Heloisa*: the very circumstances which, in others, would have banished thought, falling in her way, only fixed it more. To say she was profligate, is to speak a falsehood; to call her impudent in the confession of her weaknesses, is not to know the circumstances in which she was; and not to pity her, is to possess a heart of stone.

*Heloisa* then goes on to declare her unworthiness. "They, who cannot look into my soul, think me virtuous; they think me chaste, because my actions are so; when surely this amiable virtue only dwells within the mind. Men may praise me, but before God I am worthless: he is the searcher of hearts, and his eye penetrates into the inmost thoughts." — She mentions the hypocritical morality of the age, which is satisfied with the outward show of virtue. Some praise, she owns, is due to such actions; but that we are obliged not only to abstain from evil, but likewise to do good: neither of them, however, she declares, have any claim to a reward, unless they be done from a motive of pleasing God.

But

But if so, she adds, what must her pretensions be to any reward hereafter? "Through the whole course of my life, God knows, what have been my dispositions. It was you, Abeillard, and not him, whom I feared most to offend; you, and not him, I was most anxious to please. My mind is still unaltered. It was no love of him, but your command which drew me to the cloister. How miserable then my condition if, undergoing so much, I have no prospect of a reward hereafter! By external show, you have been deceived like others: you ascribed to the impressions of religion, what sprang from another source; and therefore recommending yourself to my prayers, you ask that succour from me, which I look for from you."

She begs, he will not place that confidence in her, which may cause her to lose the assistance, she wants so much. If he thinks her in good health, he will apply no medicines; if in affluence, his hand will not be open to relieve her; and if strong, she may fall, alas! before he can run in to support her. Undeserved praise, she observes, has been the ruin of many.

"Let me then entreat you, she adds, if you be an enemy to flattery, and a friend to truth, to cease from praising me. If you think, I possess any thing commendable, do not you, at least, raise the wind of vanity, which may dissipate it

BOOK V. “ at a blast. Would he be thought an able physician, who, from external symptoms should pretend to determine on the nature of an internal complaint? Things which are common to the faint and the sinner have no merit in the sight of God. Such are all outward practices, to which the hypocrite more sedulously adheres, than the greatest saint.”

She continues the same beautiful chain of reflections: “ The heart of man is depraved; it is inscrutable to human sight: who yet has fathomed it? And there are ways which seem to us straight, the ends of which lead to death. Where God has reserved judgment to himself, it is rash in man to pronounce. Praise no one while he lives. Give not commendation at a time, when the very act of doing it may make him undeserving of it. To me your praises bring the greatest delight; but therefore are they more dangerous.” — The most christian moralist never expressed finer sentiments.

Thus she concludes: “ Tell me not, in your exhortations to a religious life, that virtue is perfected in temptation, and that he only shall be crowned, who has stoutly contended.” I look for no laurels, no crown of victory, It is enough for me to keep out of the way of danger. I like not the perils of war. If God will but give me the lowest place in heaven, I shall be

“ satisfied. No jealousy is there, where each one  
 “ is pleased with his own allotment of happiness.”

BOOK

V.

More reflections on this beautiful epistle will not be necessary. The reader must have made many as he came along; and he must have admired, have pitied, and have praised the lovely writer. No subject perhaps has ever been before him, from which the moralist, the philosopher, and the man of pleasure could draw more edification and improvement. The exceptionable passages, if any there really be, will have been judged with the indulgence I requested. Severer critics may be morose, and I shall not value their censures, or envy their morality. — In language this letter is much inferior to the last: it is less studied, and consequently less classical and elegant. But the thoughts are more glowing, the expression more rapid, and the connexion of argument more precise. As the ideas occurred, she wrote them, in the first words which offered. Such is the character of passion; neglectful, but nervous, impetuous, and full. On examination it will be found that the arrangement of her thoughts is admirable: this, it should seem, is contrary to the nature of unpremeditated composition: but surprise will cease, when we reflect, how repeatedly her mind had dwelt on the subject; it was a system of ideas: the occasion therefore no sooner called for their expression, than they fell from her pen, glowing,



BOOK

V.

methodical, and natural, as they had pre-existed in the fancy of Heloisa. But innocence surely may allay with the most fervid imagination, and the humble confession of weakneses can never be construed into an attachment to vice.

The abbot of St. Gildas was little affected by this pathetic remonstrance. He had taken his resolution, or rather his mind had taken its bent, from which no effort could withdraw it. He saw, I think, with some commiseration, the unfortunate state in which Heloisa was, and he knew the sway he had over her. He resolved therefore to try the power of serious expostulation; he would prove himself the experienced physician; to whom she had alluded, and as her distemper was known to him, he would apply a remedy. This conduct was consistent and friendly, and it merits praise.

Abeillard's  
reply.

The subject of her letter he divides into four distinct heads, which he separately discusses. "I  
" will reply to them, says Abeillard, not so  
" much in my own justification, as to instruct  
" and to advise you. When you shall be made  
" sensible, that my requests are founded on  
" reason, you will be more disposed to assent  
" to them; when you shall discover that, in my  
" own concerns I am not reprehensible, you will  
" listen to me when I undertake to direct your's;  
" and the more blameless I shall appear, the less,



“ I think, you will dare to undervalue my  
“ counsels.” This is authoritative and manly. BOOK  
V.

His first reply is to the trifling objection of her name having been placed before his own. This, he says, was done agreeably to her own documents: for is not she become, by her religious profession, the spouse of God, and consequently his mistress and superior? — He then shows, in a long and rather puerile dissertation, what those virtues principally are, which should decorate the mystic spouse. She is typified in the black virgin of the Canticles, a form to which Heloisa, he observes, in the sable robes of her order, bears some resemblance. He descants on the qualities of negro-flesh, which in some regards, he says, has peculiar attractions. — But I pretend not to understand the language of mysticism, which is always intricate, and sometimes seems to glow with indecent allusions.

To her second complaint, that by mentioning the danger to which his life was exposed, he had but added to her sorrows, he says: “ And was  
“ not this also done agreeably to your own  
“ earnest request? I have your words in my  
“ recollection, (and he cites them): why then  
“ complain, that I have made you partake of  
“ my anxiety, when you had forced me to relate  
“ it? Is it, whilst I hold my life in suspense,  
“ that you would deem it expedient to be in

BOOK V. “ gladness? In joy you would be my companion,  
 “ but not in sorrow. It is in adversity that the  
 “ real friend is tried. Let me then hear no more  
 “ of these expressions, silence these wailings,  
 “ which, in truth, are not the language of sincere  
 “ affection. Or, if this be not agreeable to you,  
 “ permit me, at least, surrounded as I am by  
 “ dangers, to be anxious for my soul’s good, and  
 “ to make what provision, I can, for another  
 “ world. This foresight, if you really love me,  
 “ Heloisa, you can never censure.” — He tells  
 her, if she had any confidence in the divine  
 mercies towards him, that rather it would be her  
 wish to see him freed from present miseries, which  
 were become intolerable; that she must know,  
 that he would be his benefactor, whose kind hand  
 should close his eyes: what then might be my fate,  
 says he, is uncertain, but I now know what I  
 suffer: that the termination of actual misery would,  
 at all events, be a happiness; and that they who  
 truly love, look not to their own advantage, but  
 to the ease of their friends. “ And though their con-  
 “ versation, he goes on, give delight, they would  
 “ rather they should be absent, and be happy, than  
 “ be present, and be wretched. But even the poor  
 “ comfort of my wretched presence cannot be  
 “ allowed to you: as then you have no interest  
 “ in me, why wish me rather to live in pain, than die

“ to be happy? And could you draw any advantage  
“ from the length of my misfortunes, would it be  
“ the part of a friend or of an enemy to desire  
“ their prolongation? The name of enemy does  
“ not please you, I know; cease, therefore, from  
“ your unavailing lamentations.”

On the third head he is very short. He applauds her disapprobation of praise, which only makes her more deserving of it: he trusts, it is as sincerely in her mind, as it was strongly marked in her letter: if so, says he, you are truly humble, nor will it be dissipated by my commendation: but he advises her to be on her guard, lest by seeming to decline praise, she should only court it the more, and make her mouth give the lie to the feelings of her heart. “ My praise, he observes, shall not  
“ elate you; it shall animate you in your advances  
“ to perfection. The more it is your wish to please  
“ me, with the greater ardor you will practise  
“ my instructions. I commend not your virtues,  
“ that you may glory in them: and observe that,  
“ as the censures of enemies are often too  
“ prejudiced, so are the commendations of our  
“ friends sometimes too partial to be relied on.”

In a more grave and solemn tone he then enters on her fourth charge: “ It remains, says Abeillard,  
“ that I examine more minutely what has long  
“ been the subject of your incessant complaints; I  
“ mean the circumstance, which drew us from

BOOK V. “ the world. Here you accuse the ways of providence, when it would be more equitable to extol them. I had thought, indeed, that long ago this bitterness had been erased from your mind. The more dangerous it is, at once threatening the ruin of your soul and body, the more it merits pity, and the more it gives me pain. You declare, *Heloïsa*, that your only wish is to please me: quit then these baneful thoughts, that you may torment me no longer, that you may make me happy. With them you cannot please me; nor with them can you think to go along with me to happiness hereafter. You have professed a willingness to follow me even to the gates of misery, and will you let me go without you to those of endless joy?—Recollect what you once said; call to mind the words of your last letter, that in the manner of our conversion, and in the mode of God’s chastisement, heaven had been rather propitious to me. ” — He then very fully discusses the subject, and enumerates some circumstances of their former lives, which could only be known to themselves, dwelling on his own excesses, which, he thinks, very justly draw after them the vengeance of heaven: every where, even in the acts of greatest severity, he sees the paternal hand of mercy, working their mutual salvation, and drawing good from evil. — The whole is



interspersed with many pious and apposite reflections, which mark his resignation to providence, and the habits of a penitential and religious mind. Indelicacies there are, but they are inseparable from the subject: Heloisa herself had first moved them, and I can therefore pardon the good abbot, who only continued the discussion.

If she be so much disposed to grieve, he then advises her to turn her eyes to another object; and he recounts the circumstances of our Saviour's passion: this, he says, should challenge all her tears. He extols the wonders of his love, and he calls him her only true friend. — Again he turns his view to the divine mercies, which had been so indulgent to them both, and he concludes with a prayer, which he begs she will often repeat for herself and for him.

There was now a pause in this interesting correspondence. Abeillard had done his duty, and he waited with patience, till an answer from the Paraclet should inform him, that his letter had had its desired effect, and that Heloisa was returned to a more composed and more fortunate disposition of mind. She had received the letter, and was soon sensible from its perusal, that Abeillard was still her friend, that his judgment was better formed than her's, that his religion was more exemplary, that his virtue was more perfect, and that his general views of things were more



BOOK V. comprehensive, and more adequate to the great designs of providence. She would not answer it immediately; she would permit its documents to operate on her heart; and when the effect should be more secure, she would once more write to her friend.

Mr. Pope's  
Heloisa.

As the elegant poem of Mr. Pope, according to his own declaration, was *partly extracted* from the foregoing letters, it will not be an unseasonable digression to bring it before the reader, on the present occasion. I know the fancy of a poet is not to be curbed, and he that should dare to do it, would infringe his best prerogative. It is the abuse only of this power which is censurable. Mr. Pope had read these famous letters; but I think, he had only read an unfaithful translation of them, which was published in French, at the end of the last century. In this translation the characters of the two lovers are depicted in the falsest colors. The reader, who is now, I hope, better acquainted with them, may perhaps be disposed to think with me, that our inimitable poet might have adhered more strictly to historical truth, without any danger of undue restraint, or without having deprived his composition of a single beauty. He that has known nothing of the real lives of Abeillard and Heloisa, may have read this poem, and admired it; but he read in the dark, and he admired from the mechanical

impression which beauty makes upon the mind. It is rather a rhapsody, replete with elegant diction, and the most delightful imagery, than a methodised composition: it wants order, an exact discrimination of ideas, and that accurate fitness of character and local objects, which the poet, on other occasions so eminently possessed. I have seen a garden, into which, without much order, the most beautiful flowers of nature have been thrown, and of which the gardener's hand was not permitted to check the luxuriant growth, and this has sometimes brought to my recollection Mr. Pope's Heloise.

The poem opens at the moment, when Heloise had read Abeillard's letter to his friend, which had been put into her hands;

In these deep solitudes, &c.

But it was not love which first rose in her heart; it was pity for his sufferings, of which she had perused the sad story, and anxiety on account of the danger to which his life was hourly exposed. These sentiments, as circumstances stood, were far more natural than love.

The stir she then makes about the *dear fatal name*, is unmeaning, and in the true style of a boarding-school Miss. The name of Abeillard was familiar to every mouth at the Paraclet, and the

BOOK abbefs doubtlefs was free to pronounce it, and to  
v. write it; when ſhe pleaſed.

O write it not my hand! — &c.

Her deſign in writing was to inquire about his ſituation, and to eaſe her mind of thoughts, which gave her pain. This was laudable and ſeemly.

The following paſſage, *Relentleſs walls!* &c. is beautifully poetical; but it ill accords with Heloiſa's own account, or with the ſtate of mind which the poet had himſelf given her. Are *rugged rocks* often found within the precincts of a convent; or could thoſe of the Paraclet have been *worn by holy knees*, which till this moment, as Heloiſa tells us, had been inhabited only by thieves and howling beaſts, and where the name of God had never founded?

Though cold like you, unmov'd, and ſilent grown:

Can hardly be applied to her, whom the poet has deſcribed, the ſlave of love and man.

I tremble too, whene'er my own I find:

It is remarkable that the name of Heloiſa is only, I think, once mentioned in Abeillard's long epiſtle; ſhe might therefore eaſily count the miſfortunes which followed ſo cloſe behind it. — Can it be ſaid, when ſhe entered the

convent's solitary gloom, that *stern religion* there BOOK  
*quenched* the flame, which still burnt so furiously? V.  
 Or that

There *dy'd* the best of passions, love and fame?  
 Is *fame* a passion?

Yet write, oh write me all, &c.

Can the reader possibly know what she wishes him to write? History indeed tells us, that she wished to hear of the perils which threatened his life; but of this the poet says nothing. Incessantly, he talks of his sighs, of his tears, of his grief, as if they sympathized with those of Heloisa; as if he also had been a forlorn and hapless lover. All the tears he shed were on his own account.

Heaven first taught letters, &c.

are charming lines, and improved from the thought of Heloisa. — So are the following

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame: &c.

They are highly descriptive, and drawn from the real circumstances of their situation. But as to *divine truths*, we know that few of them fell from his tongue on the ear of Heloisa. Their hours were not spent in learned dalliance. — In the two last lines of this paragraph is made a transition from the past to the present time, for



BOOK the sake, it seems, of introducing a sentiment; at  
 V. once incongruous in the gradation of passion, and  
 extravagant in itself.

How oft, when press'd to marriage, &c.

Heloisa was, but once, pressed to marriage, and then, though reluctantly, she consented. The knot was soon after tied. Yet it must appear to the unlearned reader, from this passage, which contains the delightful description of disinterested love, and from others, that the lovers were never joined in wedlock:

No, make me mistress to the man I love!

And how can such a preposterous wish be put into the mouth of Heloisa? She had then been the wife of Abeillard for many long years; and had she not been so; surely, all circumstances considered, it was a wild wish. — Much of this passage is taken from the original letter; but, as usual, the abbess of the Paraclet is made to utter the thoughtless sentiments of the romantic Heloisa, in her eighteenth year:

Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn Day,  
 When victims at yon altar's foot we lay? &c.

On that sad day the altar of the Paraclet did not exist: nor were Abeillard and Heloisa either professed on the same day, or at the same place:



one was at Argenteuil, the other at St. Denys. BOOK  
V.  
But the poet's description of this awful scene is truly admirable, and amply compensates for the errors of time and place; it is likewise not widely remote from the real event, as I described it in simple prose. Still Mr. Pope will have it, that her eyes were now fixed on Abeillard; and what is more incredible, he even makes her say that,

Love only was her call.

Could it be *love* that drew her *from* him to the cloister? Obedience, we know, it was, and a heroic submission to his imperious mandate.

From the ensuing lines, which are indecent, and no ways warranted by the real language of Heloisa, the poet, with an apparent shock, turns to more becoming sentiments:

Ah no! instruct me other joys to prize,  
With *other beauties* charm my partial eyes:

Why with *other beauties*, when before he had mentioned none?

Ah! think at least thy flock deserves thy care, &c.

The whole passage is almost literally taken from the letters; which shows, that the poet knew how to copy accurately, when it pleased his muse.

In these lone walls (their days eternal bound)  
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,

BOOK

V.

Where awful arches make a noon-day night,  
And the dim windows shed a solemn light : &c.

Struck with this awful picture , we are not aware that it does not harmonize with the profane *plain roofs* , just mentioned , or with Paraclet's *white walls*. It is the description of an antique and venerable abbey : but the introduction of this gloomy scene was necessary that Abeillard's eyes might diffuse their rays , and dispel the darkness.

See how the force of others pray'rs I try,  
( O pious fraud of am'rous charity ! )

How was Abeillard to know that she had recourse to others prayers ? But this line may be understood ; its corresponding one can convey no idea to the most mystic conception. To beg the assistance of others prayers , on which Abeillard , in his letter , had so much insisted , is the fraud of *amorous* charity.

The darksome pines , &c.

Poetry has nothing more beautiful than these lines. The most airy mind cannot read them without some pause of reflection. The personification of *melancholy* is awfully striking ; and he that has been sad can tell , how often the inward gloom of his soul seemed to spread over every  
object ,

object, and to tinge the gayest scenes. Such were the silver springs and flowery meads of the Paraclet to the forlorn eye of Heloisa.

BOOK  
V,

Ah wretch! believ'd the spouse of God in vain, &c.

The whole passage, which follows this line, is very nearly taken from that part of Heloisa's second letter, which I styled her *lamentation*, and the reflections I there made, I wish may be applied to it. They will serve, perhaps, to reconcile the delicacy of some readers to a train of ideas, which, otherwise, must appear extremely reprehensible. Mr. Pope, whose pencil was ever charged with colors, has certainly heightened some expressions, and added of his own: for example;

Now turn'd to heav'n, I weep my past offence;  
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.

How impious are these last words, and how unfairly do they represent the sorrowing mind of Heloisa! In bitterness she confessed her weaknesses, lamenting that still she was subject to them. Shall the poet, when he handles historic subjects, have no respect for truth of character, and only seek to please by such means, as his imagination may suggest?

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot? &c.

## BOOK

V.

Can these lines be read without a wish of being this blameless vestal? I think, I have known nuns, to whom, in truth, each word might have been applied. In their innocence taken from the world; taught to believe that out of those walls all was sin and wickedness, and that within them religion, with every virtue, only dwelt; impressed with the awful idea, that they heard the voice of God calling them to the happy state: could there be minds better prepared for the ingress of that charming enthusiasm, which the poet has described?

Grace shines around her with serenest beams,  
 And whispering angels prompt her golden dreams.  
 For her th' unfading rose of Eden b'ooms,  
 And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes;  
 For her the spouse prepares the bridal ring,  
 For her white virgins Hymeneals sing;  
 To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,  
 And melts in visions of eternal day.

Such was not the state of Heloisa. The tumult of her mind, Mr. Pope then strongly contrasts with the serenity of his blameless vestal:

Far other dreams, &c.

He availed himself of a single line in the original, and out of it drew a descriptive scene, too glowing in its coloring, and too luscious in its imagery. How unguarded, in general, is the poet's pen,



even when he pretends to admire virtue, and to be in love with innocence!

BOOK  
V.

For thee the fates, severely kind, &c.

The transition is beautiful, from the troubled breast of Heloisa, to the *long dead calm* of Abeillard's mind. It is copied from the letters, the last lines excepted, which are in the happiest style of our poet:

Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,  
Or moving spirit bade the waters flow; &c.

The following passage is also sufficiently justified by the original,

What scenes appear, where'er I turn my view? &c.  
With this difference, however, that there it is simply narrative, and here poesy has profusely spread her most bewitching graces; there Heloisa bemoans the captive state of her soul, and here she recounts it with seeming complacency. So opposite is art to nature!

But with this departure from truth, (which, with the impression of his lines on my mind, I could not but have forgiven,) Mr. Pope was not satisfied: he proceeds in a description, which is all fictitious; and from an opening, gentle as the first dawns of grace, rises to a climax of passion which terminates in raging phrenzy;

Snatch me, just mounting, from the blest abode,  
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God!

BOOK

V.

She says to Abeillard. With reason has this passage been often censured as extremely reprehensible. And would his Heloisa have been less amiable, had she been less extravagant? In truth, I know not, how she could so soon have lost sight of the cold and lifeless Abeillard, she had just described; and the reflection should rather have checked this rant of passion. But as in tragic composition, every affection of the mind must be carried to its crisis, and there burst, so would not Mr. Pope quit his Heloisa, till he had extinguished in her every ray of that transcendent reason, which she so eminently possessed.

Happily, however, shocked at her own extravagance, she instantly exclaims;

No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole;  
Rise Alps between us! and whole oceans roll!

But the annexed ideas prove, that her understanding was still bewildered. *Ah, come not: Abeillard was not disposed to come.—Write not: this was the very thing, she had so earnestly requested.—Think not once of me: it was a groundless solicitude:*

Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.  
*Thy oaths I quit:* she was not free to break the matrimonial bond.

Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.

The reader, who knows what Abeillard's real BOOK  
dispositions had long been, and how much Heloisa V.  
complains of his ungrateful usage, will hardly  
relish the poet's opposition to the truth of history.

At last opens, in charming measure, the triumph  
of grace:

Oh grace serene! &c.

I am delighted with this return of reason, and  
to find again the Heloisa, repentant and guiltless,  
whom these pages have exhibited. I knew her not  
in the meretricious dress of the poet; yet awkward  
is her following attitude;

See in her cell sad Heloisa *spread*:

And it may be made a question, whether, *spread*  
as she is described, she could also, at the time, be  
*propt on some tomb*? — Mr. Pope likewise might  
have known that tombs are never raised in the  
cells of nuns: but it is clear, though he calls it a  
cell, that he has placed her in the cloisters, or rather  
in one of the aisles of the church.

Here, as I watch'd the dying lamps around,  
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound:  
"Come, Sister, come!" &c.

It is the invitation, which a fainted maid gives  
to the sad Heloisa; she calls her to *eternal sleep*  
well therefore may she say that all here is *calm*;

That grief forgets to groan, and love to weep.

BOOK  
V.

Though to *sleep* for ever be no enticing thought,  
yet is Heloisa ready to obey the call;

I come, I come! &c.

Still, turning to Abeillard, she begs he will pay the last sad office, and *catch her flying soul*; or rather, (which would be more in character; as he was a priest and an abbot,) that in *sacred vestments* he would stand by her side, and

Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.

But as she speaks to Abeillard of her own death only, where is the propriety of the exclamation,

Oh death, all-eloquent! you only prove,  
What dust we doat on, when 'tis man we love?

This she might have said, hanging over the corpse of her husband.

Then too, when fate shall thy fair frame destroy, &c.

One grave did unite them, as the sequel of this history will show.—The conclusion of this admired poem proceeds in the same line of beauty: it is exquisitely affecting; and though we know, that Mr. Pope was never joined by fate in a *similitude of griefs* to Heloisa; though he never loved *so long, so well* as she, yet he was the bard to tell her sad and tender story;

The well-sung woes will sooth my pensive ghost.



I have ventured this short critique on Mr. Pope's BOOK  
V.  
Heloisa. Blemishes it certainly has, as a composition, only that they are lost to most eyes, in the dazzling glare of its beauties. But its moral imperfections are of a more serious nature. Never, I believe, was there a more dangerous production. It presents poison to the hand of inexperienced youth, and the cup which holds it is all of burnished gold. It would have been well, I believe, for the common interests of virtue and innocence, had this seductive poem never seen the light.

The serious contents of Abeillard's last letter, though they had not wholly reformed the mind of Heloisa, which was not possible, yet had they greatly contributed to abate its too fervid tone. She felt herself more tranquil, and more resigned to heaven: this was the moment to answer his letter.

" That you may not have it in your power to  
" charge me with disobedience, says she, as you  
" ordered me to check the language of immoderate  
" grief, I have done it: when I write to you,  
" my expressions shall be more temperate, but,  
" on other occasions, I cannot promise to refrain  
" my tongue. Nothing is less in a man's power  
" than his own mind: to obey it he is often forced,  
" and seldom can he command its operations.  
" The sudden impulse of strong affections cannot

Heloisa's  
third letter.

BOOK V. “ be at once repressed ; their effects are visibly mar-  
 “ ked on the countenance, and they announce them-  
 “ selves in words, which are their readiest vehicle.  
 “ From the abundance of the heart the mouth  
 “ speaketh. But even when my tongue shall be  
 “ ungovernable, I will keep my hand in sub-  
 “ jection: it would be well, if the mind which  
 “ grieves were as subservient to my voice.— To  
 “ restore my mind to serenity, is not, I fear, in  
 “ your power ; but you can moderate its sorrow.  
 “ One thought is banished by another. The chain  
 “ of gloomy meditation is broken, when new  
 “ objects arise to engage the attention ; and the  
 “ more honorable, or expedient, or interesting  
 “ these may appear, the more intense will be their  
 “ impression, and the more will the mind turn  
 “ aside from trouble.”

With this view, she proposes to Abeillard two subjects, on which she would wish him to enter. The first was the origin of the monastic institute, as it related to nuns ; and the second, the ordaining of a rule solely adapted to women, which should be received at the Paraclet. This, she observes, had not hitherto been done ; in consequence of which, all that engaged in the monastic life, men or women, were obliged to practise the same rule ; which, through the whole Latin church, was that of St. Bennet. She then examines this famous rule, and shows, in how many instances, its practices and forms are incompatible with

the habits and dispositions of women ; for whom  
therefore, she determines, it could not have been  
primarily intended. " But then, cries she, how  
" ridiculous, and even presumptuous, to bind  
" ourselves, by a solemn engagement, to an in-  
" stitute, which we can neither understand nor  
" practise. Prudence is the mother of all virtues,  
" and by reason must our conduct be ever regu-  
" lated : these are the only basis of whatever may  
" be termed laudable or religious. Before a bur-  
" den be laid on, the strength of the shoulders  
" must be tried, which are to support it."

B O O K  
V.

Even St. Bennet himself, she notices, had  
wisely modelled his rule, agreeably to the circum-  
stances of the times, and the dispositions of his  
subject : what then would he not have done,  
had he been employed to give laws to the  
weaker sex? For this sex, she thinks, it would  
be enough, not to aim, in their religious institutes,  
at a higher perfection, than what is practised by  
the ministers of the church; even it would be well  
could they emulate the virtues of the pious laity.  
" Would to God, she goes on, we were only  
" able, by our best exertions, to fulfil the gospel  
" precepts, and not to surpass them; that we  
" did not aspire to be more than christians!" —  
From the greater sobriety of women, which  
arises, Heloisa remarks; from the nature of their  
constitutions, she draws an argument to prove,

BOOK V. that they should be under no restriction in the use of what they may chuse to eat or drink. The world, she says, is visibly grown old, and its inhabitants possess no longer that strength of texture, which belonged to their progenitors: rules, therefore, which were enacted for the good of men, should vary as he varies: owing to this observation, she says, it was, that St. Bennet indulged his monks with the use of wine. — “At all events, continues she, why be so licitous about things, which are so indifferent in themselves; which the sinner and the saint may equally practise. Let sin be prohibited; but let us have every other indulgence possible.” She proceeds to discuss the nature of external observances, which she treats as things of no value. Virtue alone, she says, has merit before heaven; the true christian is solely occupied in perfecting his moral character: it is from the will that evil flows, and not from what is external to it.

She concludes: “But it is now, Sir, your duty to make such regulations for us, as may be binding on the Paraclet for ever. You, under God, are the founder of this house. When you are gone, we may have a teacher, who may be disposed to build on another foundation. For us, we fear, he may be less solicitous, or we may be less attentive to him: should he be willing to serve us, as you are, he may not be equally capable. Do you speak to us, and we will listen. Farewel.”



The sound judgment and enlarged views of Heloisa are eminently conspicuous throughout this letter. Her's are not the ideas of a woman, narrowed by a cloistered education. She had studied, with much attention, the character of her sex; the design and nature of the monastic institute she had freely viewed; the real precepts and duties of christianity she had cautiously discriminated from human inventions, and from those external works, on which too many rely; and she had convinced herself that it was preposterous to aim at the high flights of romantic piety, while those virtues are over-looked as insufficient, on which alone the true spirit of the gospel rests. She proposed that her nuns should aspire to perfection, by the practice only of the domestic virtues; that they should strive to be happy in the society of one another; that their tempers should not be soured by corporal macerations, or the infliction of humiliating chastisements; and that enjoying the comforts of a sound mind, with a constitution invigorated by proper nourishment, they should be able to improve their understandings by study, to sing the praises of their maker with alacrity and perseverance, and to edify their neighbours by a display of virtues, which it is equally the duty of every christian citizen to practise.

Abeillard undertook to make a very full reply to the two principal questions proposed by

Abeillard's  
answer.

BOOK  
V.

Heloisa. He was pleased to find that her mind began to turn from the thoughts, which had oppressed it, and that it would be bent on inquiries, from which improvement and instruction might be drawn, and on which also he himself would have an opportunity of exercising his authority, and of displaying his erudition. — He first treats of the origin of the female monastic institute, which he deduces from the earliest times: it began, he says, with Christ, and his immediate successors. He pursues the subject into its various branches, adducing authorities from Pagan, Jewish, and Christian sources, to prove that women, with their virtues, were ever the first favorites of heaven, and that by men they were, at all times, held in the highest estimation. — It is a loose and uninteresting dissertation, into which, without order, he seems to have thrown whatever he could collect on the subject. The ladies of the Paraclet might be pleased with the flattering encomium on their sex: in every other view, it has little merit.

On the second part he is even more diffuse: he enumerates the three leading virtues, which belong to the cloister, continence, poverty, and silence, and he dwells on each of them. He then specifies the constitutions, which Heloisa had requested, which are to regulate the internal and external economy of the Paraclet, in the distribution of their

hours, in the form and quality of their drefs, and in the nature and quantity of their food. There is much good fenfe in all thefe arrangements, and had they been delivered in a more fimple and didactic ftyle, they would even now be read with pleafure. He fhows that indulgence to the weakneffes of human nature, on which the abbefs had fo ftrongly infifted, and the perfection he requires is rather to be drawn from an univerfal moderation and abftemioufnefs, than from any particular practices of fafting and penitence: on this head, they are to obferve the eftablifhed laws of the church.—I am not fufficiently acquainted with the rules of the different monaftic orders of women, to fay how far thefe conftitutions of Abeillard may depart from the ufual form: I believe, however, there is little that is new in them, unlefs they be compared with thofe more rigid intitutes, which, fome years after, the feraphic zeal of other founders introduced into the church.

And here, as far as hiftory informs us, closes the epiftolary correpondence betwixt Abeillard and Heloifa. The good abbot had reafon to be fatisfied with the refult of his endeavours; and Heloifa, we may not doubt, from this time, became a happier woman. To reduce into practice the documents, fhe had received, and to adapt them to the genius and difpofitions of the houfe, over which fhe prefided, would now be her principal care.

**BOOK** The occupation, as she had herself observed, would engage her attention, and the anxious troubles of her mind, indulged no longer, would give way to better thoughts. — How the reform at St. Gildas went on, we are not told, nor do we read any more of the persecutions and complaints of their abbot. A great part of his time must have been given to writing, which was chiefly dedicated to the nuns of the Paraclet. I will speak of these works.

Other works  
of Abeillard.

The first of them seems to have been an address to the Paraclet\*, in which he exhorts the nuns to the study of the holy scriptures. He speaks much of the learning, of the conduct, and of the example of St. Jerom, who had deemed it no unworthy office to attend to the education of women. The old man had sketched out the first elementary lines for his favorite Paula, and he promises to become her master and her play-fellow, if necessary; that he will carry her on his shoulders, that he will help her to form her first words, and that he shall take more glory in it, than did Aristotle in the tutorage of Alexander. Abeillard could not be ashamed to tread in the steps of this great man. — He strongly recommends the study of the Greek and Hebrew languages, as essentially necessary to the due understanding of the sacred writers, and he talks much of the great

\* Op. Abeil. p. 251.



imperfection of all translations. “ You , says he BOOK  
 “ to the nuns, are inexcusable, if you neglect to V.  
 “ acquire this important learning; you have no  
 “ long journeys to make in quest of it, no expenses  
 “ to incur. In Heloisa you have a mistress, who  
 “ can suffice for all: virtue she will teach you by  
 “ example, and literature by precept. Versed in  
 “ Latin, and not unskilled in the Hebrew and  
 “ Greek languages, she alone, at this time, seems  
 “ to possess that knowledge, which in the blessed  
 “ Jerom was so much extolled.” —Happy, he says  
 is that person, who, turning over the divine  
 volumes, can draw their sense from the purest  
 source, and who is not necessitated to recur to  
 muddy streams, which are so ill qualified to allay  
 his thirst. But he laments that, with the study of  
 the ancient languages, all knowledge of them had  
 long been lost, excepting what, to the shame of the  
 other sex, still remained with the abbess of the  
 Paraclet. — He concludes this not inelegant address,  
 by again pressing them to the most serious studies;  
 that this they can do with more ease than the  
 monks, because they are less engaged in manual  
 labor; and he advises them to beware, lest the  
 enemy, in their indolence, or in the weakness of  
 their sex, lay snares for their virtue.

The nuns, as we shall see, were animated by  
 this address: they took the advice of their master;  
 Heloisa showed the way; and they entered on

**B O O K** the new career which was opened to them. They  
**V.** studied the learned languages, and they read the scriptures. Envious would be the conventual life, were it always so employed! But they found many difficulties, which grew on them as they advanced; (for it is only to the superficial and vain inquirer that the sense of the inspired word is always plain and intelligible,) and these difficulties they laid before their abbess. Some she could remove; but others, as became her, she acknowledged, lay not within the limits of her humble comprehension. As these impediments multiplied, they were disturbed, and they pursued their labors with less alacrity. Heloisa then advised them to note down, every day, such difficulties as in their reading should occur, and when they rose to any bulk, she promised to send them to Abeillard for his solution. Thus was formed that collection of *Problems*, which is in the works of Abeillard<sup>o</sup>.

They are preceded by a preface written by Heloisa, wherein she states the circumstances, I have mentioned, and are forty-two in number: to each problem is immediately subjoined Abeillard's solution. — The questions are proposed in a very succinct and accurate manner, and some of them are such, as have ever given trouble to the most sagacious commentators. The replies are often diffuse and desultory, and seldom seem

<sup>o</sup> Op. Abeil. p. 384

to reach the difficulty: he indulges his taste in forced and figurative interpretations, and when the problem presses hard has recourse to mystery. His answer to the last difficulty is a casuistical discussion of matters, the like to which, probably, was never laid before a convent of nuns. It is wantonly assumed, as the question related to no such subject: vanity or pruriency of imagination therefore must have suggested the unseemly digression.

The next work I find, is a body of *Sermons*, on the principal festivals of the year, mostly written for the use of the Paraclet<sup>11</sup>. Heloisa had begged them from him, and for that reason, he says, he had composed them. "I am not used, he observes to her, to this style of composition: I aim at no eloquence, but in plain language to express my thoughts. And, perhaps, the more homely this expression be, the better it is adapted to common understandings: to them my simple language may have the recommendation of elegance, and what they conceive most easily, they may relish best." — Notwithstanding this humble declaration, I discover no marks of negligence or want of art in the sermons: they are some of his best compositions, though they contain nothing very new or interesting. Nor was it at all necessary, he should have studied any

BOOK  
V.

<sup>11</sup> Op. Abeil. p. 729.

BOOK peculiar simplicity of diction in his addresſes to  
 V. the Paraclet: the nuns of this houſe, as already noticed, were ſingularly learned.

As an additional proof that they were ſo, it may be obſerved, that theſe ſermons, deſigned for their inſtruction, were written in Latin, which, though at that time more generally underſtood than at preſent, had long ceaſed to be the vulgar language. The ancient Gauliſh, or French, as we learn from the monuments of the times, was then in common uſe. On the feſtivals, to which they belonged, theſe ſermons were read publicly in the church of the Paraclet<sup>12</sup>.

His treatiſe againſt *Hereſies*, which were the errors of the age, is not incurious; as it ſhows us, not only what thoſe errors were, but likewise points out the doctrine of the church, as believed in the twelfth century. This is an important link in the great chain of tradition, which we hold in our hands, tracing its eaſy progreſs from ourſelves up to thoſe times, when the principles of chriſtianity were firſt promulgated. — Abeillard, in this work, briefly ſtates the error, and then combats it by the authorities of revelation. Theſe authorities are not always convincing, but they were the popular arguments of the day. — He ſeems to have been extremely well verſed in ſcripture.

<sup>12</sup> Præf. Apolog.



learning; which proves that, even in the darkest ages, those sacred volumes were not neglected, and that the Reformation, as is pretended, was not a providential arrangement to rescue them from the disgrace and oblivion, in which they had been sunk. We have seen how strongly their study was recommended to the Paraclet, and with what attention they were there read and investigated: or were Abeillard and his nuns the only biblical students of the age? The contrary is well known.

Abeillard also wrote an *Exposition* of the Lord's prayer, which is familiar, concise, and instructive; and another of the Apostle's creed, which has equal merit<sup>13</sup>. It was when he aimed at superior learning and allegorical comments, that his writings are unsatisfactory: his genius was naturally clear and penetrating, and left to itself, without all doubt, it would have thrown great light on the abstrusest inquiries: but when the hemisphere is overcast, what eye looks for the brightness of a meridian sun?

But the abbot's very principal work is a *Commentary* on the epistle to the Romans, in five books<sup>14</sup>. Contrary to the whimsical taste of the age, which ran into playful allegories, the author here attaches himself to the literal sense, and by an easy

<sup>13</sup> Op. p. 59.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. p. 491.

BOOK

V.

paraphrase, endeavours to point out the chain of reasoning of the apostle, and the connexion of his discourse. This he has executed very ably. He introduces dissertations on the most knotty points of theology, such as original sin, free will, grace, and predestination, and he shows at least that he possessed a metaphysical aptitude for the discussion of such matters. There is much erudition throughout the whole commentary, and an extensive knowledge of the writings of the ancient fathers.—To the head of the work is prefixed a short introduction, wherein he treats of the scriptures in general: “And as the design of the four gospels, says he, is to teach those things which every christian must know, so were the epistles written to inculcate a strict attention and obedience to them; yet do these also contain some wholesome documents and advice, which, though they appertain not to the essence of belief, may serve to develope its tenets, and to embellish the christian establishment.”

St. Bernard  
visits the Pa-  
raclet.

It was about this time, that Bernard of Clairvaux to whose acquaintance I have already introduced the reader, made a visit to the Paraclet.—From the time we left him, newly elected abbot, and growing, by his virtues and his talents, into universal renown, he had been engaged in the

most arduous concerns of Europe. Drawn reluctantly from his cell, he assisted at the council of Troyes, where he received the commission to settle the rule of the military order of Templers, just established.—At Estampes before the king, the great dispute between Innocent and Anacletus, both chosen popes of Rome, was referred to Bernard: he weighed the important matter, and decided in favor of the first, whose election, he said, was canonical. The assembly approved his decision. He then wrote circular letters to many princes and bishops in favor of Innocent. — In 1131 he refused the bishopric of Chalons, and also that of Genoa. Three years after he was in Italy, where he assisted at the council of Pisa, and was the soul of every process: his levee was crowded by bishops, and the whole power of the church seemed vested in his hands; yet was his humility more transcendent than the applause which echoed round him.—Returning from Pisa, by the command of his Holiness, he passed by Milan. The Milanese came out to meet him; they threw themselves at his feet, imploring his benediction; they cut shreds from his garments, in attestation of his sanctity; and with the loudest acclamations they introduced him into their city. During his stay among them, extraordinary indeed are the miracles, he is said to have worked in their favor. Every disorder gave way to the efficacy of his

BOOK  
V.

prayers. The neighbouring towns and villages were emptied of their inhabitants, and all Lombardy was in motion to see this man of wonders. The constant press, which curiosity or devotion thus thickened round him, was too violent to be borne; he resisted their solicitations in vain, and withdrew from the crowd; but he was soon compelled to show himself from the windows to the people, and from thence to give them his benediction.—In the midst of this overpowering tide of plaudits and admiration, Bernard stood confused; he acknowledged his own unworthiness, and the glory of his miracles he gave to God and to the faith of the people. They offered him the archiepiscopal mitre of their city, which was vacant; he refused it, and retired.—Soon after we find him at Clairvaux, occupied in building a new monastery, as the old one was found too small to contain the great number of monks, who daily crowded to him<sup>15</sup>.

What was the motive of his visit to the Paraclet, we are not told. Probably he was curious to see a woman, about whose endowments fame spoke so loudly. We know, indeed, that he had been long pressed to go<sup>16</sup>; for Heloisa and her nuns could not have heared with indifference, that so great a treasure resided, not many miles from

<sup>15</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.

<sup>16</sup> Op. p. 244.



their convent. They received him as an angel from heaven. He admired the regularity of their discipline, and he was charmed with the deportment and learned conversation of the abbess and her sisters. With an engaging attention he read and approved the rules of their institute; and more than once he publicly preached to them, with that unctious and imposing eloquence, which were so much his own. Never was there a sacred orator, who, by a soft manner, a pathetic diction, and a gentle flow of glowing ideas, understood so well every approach to the heart. But he was not of a temper to approve, where he saw cause for reprehension; and the most trifling deviation from the established forms of the church was enough to excite his censure. He observed, that, in the Lord's prayer, instead of *daily* bread, they used the word *super substantial*. The novelty struck him, and he inquired by what authority it had been introduced? The abbess informed him, that Abeillard the founder of their house, and their guide in religion, had so permitted it. — The reader will recollect that Bernard, long before, had been irritated against the abbot of St. Gildas: he therefore, on this occasion, treated his name with some asperity, and he told Heloisa, that the innovation was very censurable.

Not long after, some very pressing business

BOOK  
V.

obliged Abeillard to go over to the Paraclet<sup>27</sup>. He was told with much exultation of the visiter they had had; that they had impatiently longed to see him; that he was a divine man; and that when he had spoken to them on the truths of religion, they had heard, they thought, the voice of an angel<sup>28</sup>. Such warm encomiums would not be so pleasing, probably, to the ears of Abeillard. The abbess had equally admired the man of God; but she was not blind in her admiration, nor could she sacrifice an old friend to the imposing character of the young abbot of Clairvaux. In conversing therefore with Abeillard she, one day, with some address, told him of the remark, Bernard had made, on their use of the word *super substantial*, and she added: “The  
“ holy man is much your admirer; he praised  
“ your institute, and he applauded the discipline  
“ of our convent: that one thing only he could  
“ not approve, and he charged you with in-  
“ novation,”—Abeillard was little pleased with the flattery, as he saw it proceeded from the conciliating mind of Heloisa; but the censure stung him, and he thought he could be revenged.

Returned into Britany, he had soon prepared a letter for the abbot of Clairvaux. “Having  
“ heard at the Paraclet, says he, that you had

<sup>27</sup> Op. p. 244.<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

“ censured me, it was natural I should be anxious to apologize for my conduct: it is your displeasure, which I should be more sorry to incur, than that of all the rest of mankind.”—He then shows, that the Lord’s prayer is only to be found in the two gospels of Matthew and Luke: that Matthew received his from the mouth of his master Christ, and that Luke was only instructed by St. Paul, who could know nothing, but by report, of the substance of our Saviour’s discourses; consequently the prayer of the former, which was in itself more full and perfect, was to be preferred to that of Luke.—He lays before him the two prayers, the one composed of seven, the other of five, petitions; and he observes, that it was the superior excellence of the one, which had given it the preference in the public service of the church. “ How then has it happened, continues Abeillard, that into the prayer of Matthew should have been foisted the word *daily* of Luke, when its own *superfubstantial* was more expressive and apposite? It is no small presumption, it seems, thus to alter the expression of an apostle, as if he did not himself sufficiently understand the import of words.”—He adduces the authority of the Greek church, which adheres to the reading of Matthew, though Luke wrote his gospel in their own language.— “ If I am not egregiously

BOOK  
V.

“ mistaken then, says he, rather accuse me of  
 “ any thing, than of innovation or arrogance in  
 “ this business; me, who scrupulously chuse to  
 “ follow the language of Christ and his apostle,  
 “ and the evident testimony of the Greek church.”—  
 “ But observe, he goes on, I lay no commands on  
 “ any one; I even persuade no one, to follow  
 “ me, and to depart from the vulgar practice.  
 “ Let each one rest on his own judgment. This  
 “ only is my advice, that he be cautious not to  
 “ prefer forms to reason, and practice to venerable  
 “ truth.”

Having proceeded thus far in his own vindication,  
 which is manly and persuasive, he suddenly turns  
 on his adversary, and attacks him with spirit:  
 “ And is it not this same reason, says he, of which  
 “ you yourselves are so vehemently enamoured,  
 “ as to dare to support it against the universal  
 “ practice of the church? You are but men of  
 “ yesterday; yet glorying in the novelty of your  
 “ order, you have made decrees, by which the  
 “ divine service is to be performed among you,  
 “ differently from the ancient, and all the modern,  
 “ usages of monks and churchmen. Nor in this  
 “ do you deem yourselves reprehensible. It may  
 “ be a singularity, or a deviation from antiquity,  
 “ you allow; but it accords with reason and the  
 “ tenor of your institute; and while this is so,  
 “ little do you value the astonishment, or the



“ murmurs, of discontented spectators.” — He enumerates a long list of the peculiarities, observed by the Cisterian monks in their church-service, which he treats as absurdities, or at best as puerile singularities, to which, however, they profess the warmest attachment, and in which he is not disposed to give them the smallest disturbance. Variation, he observes, has ever been allowed in language and in general discipline; and he instances many practices which then prevailed, all which were permitted, provided only the sacred integrity of faith were not violated. It is here that unity must be fixed. This variety, he thinks, in the modes of worshipping our maker, has its advantages; and that too servile an uniformity may sometimes generate disgust. For this, in part, it was that the religion of Christ was preached in the languages of all nations; and he himself delivered the prayer in question, in two distinct forms, that different dispositions might find their satisfaction in them: but let us repeat it, says he, in the exact words of its august founder. He concludes: “ Let each  
“ one, as I said before, be guided by his own  
“ judgment, and pray as he likes it best. I advise  
“ no one to follow me; he may vary the  
“ words of Christ at will: but it shall be my  
“ endeavour to keep them and their genuine  
“ sense as unchanged as may be<sup>19</sup>.”

<sup>19</sup> Op. p. 250

BOOK

V.

There is much good sense in these observations; and I have been more particular in recounting the transaction, as it may serve hereafter to account more fully for the violent conduct of Bernard towards the unfortunate abbot of St. Gildas. How he received this spirited address, we know not; but even fairs, we have reason to think, are sometimes subject to the common feelings of human nature.

END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE LIVES OF  
ABEILLARD and HELOISA.

BOOK VI.

*William of St. Thierry accuses Abeillard — The abbot of Clairvaux engages in the quarrel — The council of Sens — Sentence against Abeillard — He sets out for Rome — Is entertained at Cluni, and consents to remain there — Arnold of Brescia — Tanchelm of Antwerp — Henry de Bruys.*

Anno, 1139.

ALMOST twenty years had now elapsed, since Abeillard, in the council of Soissons, had been compelled, unheard, to throw his work on the *Trinity* into the flames. I related the event in all its circumstances. From that time he had continued to teach, and he had published different works. They were received with approbation, and were very generally read. So arbitrary had been judged

BOOK  
VI.

BOOK

VI.

the behaviour of the synod towards him, that it had left no stigma on his reputation; even the obnoxious work itself make its own way, unopposed, and seemed to promise an increase of fame to its author.

William of  
St. Thierry  
accuses  
Abeillard.

The holy Bernard had a friend, whom he much esteemed, William, abbot of St. Thierry, in the neighbourhood of Reims. Whether William had heard of the sharp letter, which Abeillard had lately addressed to the abbot of Clairvaux, or was jealous of the applause which followed his writings, or, poring with a malignant eye over his works, he thought he had discovered errors, which it was his duty to reveal; whatever might be his motive, he determined again to blow the embers, and to revive a controversy, which the lapse of years had extinguished<sup>1</sup>. — There are men, to whom *orthodoxy* is a word so imposing, that to support it they can adopt measures, which religion, reason, and honor must ever view with disgust.

Geoffrey, bishop of Chartres, and Bernard of Clairvaux, were the two, whose zeal if he could rouse, William doubted not, but importance would be given to his undertaking. Geoffrey, it may be remembered, was the learned and benevolent prelate who, at the council of Soissons, had showed himself so well affected to the persecuted

<sup>1</sup> Vie d'Abeil. p. 80.



Abeillard. Why he, on this occasion was fixed on, is uncertain; possibly the abbot of St. Thierry, who knew how highly his abilities were rated in the French church, might be ignorant of his personal attachments. Be this as it may; he drew up a very acrimonious and pointed letter, which he addressed to the venerable persons, just mentioned. "Peter Abeillard, says he, again begins to teach his novelties and to write them: his works cross the seas, nor are the Alps any obstacle to their progress: his wild opinions deluge the provinces; they are publicly taught, and as publicly defended: it is even said, that they have found admirers in the court itself of Rome. I must therefore be open with you: your silence is dangerous to yourselves, and it is dangerous to the church of God. — Very lately a work of this man fell into my hands: it was entitled the *Theology of Abeillard*. I confess, the words excited my curiosity; I read it; and as many things therein struck me, I noted them down, with the reasons why I did so. These remarks I now send you, and with them the book itself. Form your own judgments. It is you only whom I can with propriety address on this occasion. He fears you. But if you remain silent, whom will he fear? And, if he fear no one, what shall stem the torrent of his tongue? Abeillard was once my friend; but when the sacred deposit

BOOK VI. “ of faith is exposed to danger, the name of  
 “ friend or parent weighs no longer with me<sup>2</sup>. ” —

He then enumerates the thirteen propositions, which he had extracted from the works of Abeillard, and which he pronounces to be thirteen heresies.

The bishop of Chartres returned no answer to this letter; but Bernard replied in a manner which could not be very satisfactory to the meddling accuser. “ I applaud your zeal, said he: but you  
 “ know, how little, in matters of this delicate  
 “ nature, I rely on my own judgment. It will be  
 “ proper that we proceed with caution: let us  
 “ meet, and discuss the business together. But  
 “ even this, on account of the holy time of lent,  
 “ cannot be done as yet. Excuse, I beg you,  
 “ this delay, which is the more necessary, as till  
 “ now I have been a stranger to almost every  
 “ thing you have communicated to me<sup>1</sup>. ”

Dissatisfied with this cold reply, and to urge the business more rapidly forward, William composed a more voluminous work on the subject, in which he placed his charges in a stronger light, marked more emphatically the errors of Abeillard, and seemed to triumph in a surer conquest. This likewise he sent to Bernard and the bishop. So earnest indeed was he become in the prosecution,

<sup>2</sup> Ep. Bern. n. 326.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

that to carry it on with more expedition, he reluctantly suspended a large comment on the canticles of Salomon, in which the pious affections of his heart were very warmly engaged\*.

BOOK]  
VI.

Unfortunately for Abeillard, just at this critical moment, died the bishop of Chartres. He was his friend; and as his learning and his virtues were much looked up to, probably he would have had it in his power to check the flagrant zeal of his adversaries.

The abbot of Clairvaux perused the new treatise, which had been sent him; and though he seems to have been persuaded that the charges against Abeillard were well founded, yet, wishing rather to reclaim than to irritate him, he purposed to meet him, and amicably to canvass the matter in a private interview. This was benevolent and ingenuous; but it could not be that their meeting should produce any permanent good. The minds of both had been exulcerated; nor were their natural dispositions much formed to coalesce. They met, however. Abeillard, now in years, sore from ill usage, and confident in the powers of his learning, would view the young abbot as an officious intruder, who came, not so much to conciliate, or to seek for information, as to arraign authoritatively his conduct, and to weigh his opinions in the scale of prejudice:

The abbot of  
Clairvaux  
engages in  
the quarrel.

\* Vie d'Abeil. p. 83.

BOOK VI. and when he recollected Soissons, and the judgment there passed, though arbitrarily, on his works, he would consider the present step as an attempt malevolently aimed at his repose. — Bernard declared the motives which had brought him, and he recapitulated, with some diffidence, the list of errors with which he had been charged: these errors he entreated him to retract, and then he promised, that all his influence should be used to mitigate the severity of any sentence, which his judges might be disposed to pronounce. — Abeillard, with a haughtiness, which was not misplaced, heard the remonstrance, and withdrew in silent contempt. The saint therefore called on some of his friends, and with them a second time waited on the abbot of St. Gildas. It was in vain: they found him equally untractable, and in a peremptory tone he told them, that they were free to take their own measures, and that he should take his<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> The author of Bernard's life relates this transaction very differently: he says, that Abeillard was so affected by the manner, in which his master addressed him, that he promised to correct his errors, and to conform to his will in all things: but that, no sooner were they parted, than, instigated by the bad advice of his friends, and confident of his learning, he receded from his purpose, and again denounced defiance<sup>6</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Ep. Bern. 337.

<sup>6</sup> Lib. iii. c. 5.



The abbot of Clairvaux, disappointed by the bad success of his interview, provoked by the behaviour of Abeillard, and warmed by an impetuous zeal, (which in holy men is the more dangerous, because it is believed to be suggested by the spirit of God,) resolved, as moderation had miscarried, that violence should try its efficacy: he would exert against the weak man every nerve of that unbounded influence, which the fame of his sanctity, his eloquence, and his extensive connexions in the world, had given him. He wrote to Innocent the pope, and to the Roman prelates, charging Abeillard with every heresy, which hitherto had disfigured the church of God, and with every bad design, which could animate the breast of the most profligate mortal.

BOOK

VI.

To the Cardinal Guido, who had been the scholar of Abeillard, and whose partiality for his old master he apprehended might stand in the way of his designs, he says: "I should indeed do you an injury, were I to imagine that your regard for any one could go so far, as to raise in your breast an esteem for his errors. Such love is earthly, it is brutal, and diabolical, equally pernicious to both parties.—Abeillard introduces into his writings a profane novelty of ideas and of language: he discourses on faith to overthrow its mysteries, and the words of the gospel he adopts to impugn its tenets. He, forsooth,

BOOK  
VI.

“ sees nothing obscurely, his eye penetrates the  
 “ darkeſt ſecrets: it would be well, however, if  
 “ he knew himſelf. I accuſe him not before the  
 “ heavenly father: his own book is his accuſer.  
 “ When he ſpeaks of the Trinity, we hear Arius;  
 “ when of grace, Pelagius; and when of the  
 “ perſon of Chriſt, Neſtorius’.”

To another Cardinal he uſes the ſame intemperate  
 language; “ Abeillard, he ſays, is a monk without a  
 “ rule, is a ſuperior without care, nor has diſcipline  
 “ or order the leaſt check over him. He is a man  
 “ ever varying from himſelf; interiorly a Herod,  
 “ exteriorly a Baptiſt: he is ambiguous as a riddle,  
 “ poſſeſſing nothing of a monk, but the name and  
 “ the habit. But what is this to me? Each one muſt  
 “ anſwer for himſelf. One thing there is, which I  
 “ cannot diſſemble; it appertains to all who love  
 “ the name of Chriſt. He proclaims iniquity in the  
 “ ſtreets; he corrupts the integrity of faith, and the  
 “ purity of the church. Diſputing and writing on  
 “ faith, on the ſacraments, and on the Trinity, he  
 “ overleaps the bounds which our fathers placed:  
 “ as he wills, he changes, he multiplies, and he  
 “ dimin iſhes. In his works and actions he proves  
 “ himſelf the fabricator of lies, and the worſhipper  
 “ of falſe doctrines: he is a heretic not in error  
 “ only, but in obſtinacy and in the defence of  
 “ error. He knows all things in heaven and on

’ Bern. Ep. 331.

“ earth , save only himself. Before the legate of  
 “ the Roman see , with his work he was con-  
 “ demned at Soissons. But as if that sentence  
 “ were not enough , again he exposes himself to  
 “ censure , and the last error becomes worse than  
 “ the former. Secure , however , he thinks him-  
 “ self, because he can boast that Cardinals and  
 “ Roman prelates have been his scholars ; them,  
 “ whom he should have feared as his judges , he  
 “ dares to call the protectors of his past and  
 “ present errors \*.”

BOOK  
 VI.

The same means of defamation he used at home, decrying the principles and person of Abeillard, and holding up both to the ridicule and detestation of the whole French church †.

Upon what principles of morality or honor this conduct of Bernard can be justified , I know not. Had Abeillard been guilty of more errors than were laid to his charge, and had his behaviour been reprehensible as he described it: still is the worst enemy of God or man to be treated with language so foul, so insulting , and so unchristian? But Abeillard, in truth , was not guilty of a single error, nor was he obstinate in defending a single opinion, and the universal tenor of his life was religious, penitential, and exemplary.

The abbot of St. Gildas could not long be ignorant of these violent proceedings of his

\* Bern. Ep. 336.

† Ep. 337.

B O O K

VI.

enemy, (for they were echoed through every province, and from kingdom to kingdom,) and he saw the necessity of opposing some obstacle to their further spread. Should he be longer silent, there was an end of his reputation for ever, nor would his person be hardly secure within the walls of his own convent. But what ground could he take that would be tenable against the commanding powers of the abbot of Clairvaux? He could call to his assistance all the interest of the earth, and the angels of heaven were obedient to his beck. However, innocent, he knew, he was, and he would try once more what those arms could do, with which formerly, in the schools of Paris, he had fought and conquered. He recollected that Samson, the stout Nazarean, though forlorn, and old, and surrounded by his enemies, was not deserted by his native strength, and that even when he fell he triumphed.

At Sens, an archiepiscopal city in Champagne, was to be performed the ceremony of the translation of a saint's body into the cathedral-church. To grace the solemn pageant, all the bishops of the diocese with their clergy were to assemble; as likewise those from the neighbouring district of Reims. The king also, it was said, would honor the meeting with his presence. — Abeillard judged this might be a proper occasion for the public justification of his principles, and that from hence



the kingdom might soon learn, that he was orthodox in his opinions, and irreproachable in his conduct: nor did he despair of being able to draw down some confusion on his enemies. He therefore waited on the archbishop of Sens; he laid before him the motives of his journey, and he implored his protection. "The abbot of Clairvaux, said he, declaims against my writings: I am ready to defend them in public assembly, and I request that he be cited to appear before you. I will meet him." The archbishop could but approve of a proposal which was ingenuous and equitable, and he assured Abeillard that, as far as it lay in his power, justice should be done him<sup>10</sup>. Nor is it improbable, that he might be pleased with the prospect of an important controversy, which would give some relief to the main ceremony, and in which he, with his suffragan bishops, should sit as judges.

Agreeably to his design, he wrote to St. Bernard, acquainting him of Abeillard's complaint and challenge, and naming the day on which he should expect to see him at Sens. The good abbot refused to appear, and he grounded his refusal on this reasoning: that he was young and inexperienced in controversy, and that Abeillard had been a trained soldier from his cradle; that the tenets of faith, which were founded on the infallible word of God, ought not, in his opinion, to

<sup>10</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.

BOOK  
VI.

be submitted to human investigation; that his own writings were sufficient to condemn him; and that it was the duty of bishops, and not his concern, to pronounce on matters of belief<sup>11</sup>.

Fixed in the same sentiments, he addressed the bishops who were assembling at Sens. "I am challenged, as you have heard, says he, to a public disputation: the servant of God should rather bear all patiently, than contend. Were <sup>a</sup> the cause my own, I might place confidence perhaps in your protection: but it is yours; I therefore entreat and admonish you, to show yourselves the friends of Christ in the day of need.—Be not surprised, that thus suddenly you are called upon: it has been the wily artifice of the enemy, that he might attack you unprepared, and thus more easily force you into terms<sup>12</sup>."

There was a pusillanimity and an affectation of moderation in this behaviour of Bernard. He had himself been the aggressor; and if he was not prepared to meet the man he had injured and insulted, it only proves, that he had precipitately engaged in a business, which it would have become him to have weighed more maturely. But he had vainly expected, it seems, that the sound of his name would have over-awed the abbot of St. Gildas, and that he should have been able,

<sup>11</sup> Bern. Ep. 189.<sup>12</sup> Ep. 187.

without the noise of controversy, to have effected his condemnation. BOOK  
VI.

Abeillard was elated by the timid conduct of his adversary: his reluctance he could only ascribe to the conscious apprehension of a defeat; he talked loud, he called on his friends, and he assembled his admirers. To those who were distant from him he communicated, with exultation; the joyful news; nor, in his letters, did he treat with much tenderness the abbot of Clairvaux. If he will dare to meet me, said he, he shall know that I am prepared to answer to his charges.—The reader must observe, that this account is taken from the pen of Bernard".

"The boasting of Abeillard, says the saint, was soon public, nor could I be ignorant of it. At first I dissembled, for by popular clamor I was but little moved. My friends were urgent, and I gave way, though with tears, to their advice: they saw the preparations which were making as for a public spectacle, and they feared lest by my absence the people might be injured, and the enemy triumph. His errors also, they said, would only gain strength, if no one should be present to answer or to oppose them". — He set out. The discouraging reflection hung upon his mind, that he was unprepared for, and unequal to, the contest:

<sup>13</sup> Ep. 189.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

BOOK but in the words of the gospel he found consolation; "Be not thoughtful, how or what to speak, for at that same hour shall be given you what you are to speak." Thus pensively musing he travelled on, and arrived, when he was little expected, on the appointed day, at Sens.

The council  
of Sens.

The assembly opened with great splendor. Lewis the young, king of France, was there, with his nobles; as were William count of Nevers, and Theobald count of Champagne. The clergy were numerous: the archbishop of Sens with his suffragan bishops, and Samson of Reims, with the prelates of his diocese. Many abbots with their monks, professors from the schools, and the learned men of the kingdom, were present<sup>1</sup>.—The first day was spent in the ceremony of translating the relics, for which the meeting had been principally convened; and it was done with uncommon pomp and magnificence. The presence of the king gave a brilliancy to every ceremony.

The gorgeous day was over, and the next rose with unusual expectation. The members of the assembly took their seats; king, lords, prelates, and commons. The two abbots entered, followed by their friends, and walked to their respective places. Every eye was on them. A dead silence prevailed. The abbot of Clairvaux rose from his seat:

<sup>1</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.



his attitude spoke diffidence, and his countenance was humble. "I am no accuser of this man," said he, let his own works speak against him. "Here they are, and these are the propositions extracted from them. Let him deny they are his; or condemn them, if they be erroneous; or let him answer to the objections I shall urge against them."—He then delivered the charges into the hands of the Promoter, to be distinctly read.

He began to read, and the council listened with attention: but he had not advanced far, when he was interrupted by the rising of Abeillard. The step was irregular; out of respect, however, to his character, they showed a readiness to hear him.—*I appeal to Rome*, said he, and stepped forward to quit the assembly.—A general surprise struck every countenance; they could hardly give credit to their ears: but when the murmur had subsided, Bernard advanced and spoke. "Abeillard, said he, do you fear for your person? You have permission to speak freely and in full security: no sentence shall be pronounced against you."—The remonstrance was without effect. "I have appealed to the Roman see," replied he, and instantly withdrew.

Writers have been much puzzled to account for this extraordinary behaviour of Abeillard. The admirers of Bernard say, that he was so struck

B O O K by the more than human appearance of the faint,  
 VI, as to lose his recollection and all presence of mind<sup>16</sup>.—It is the opinion of others that, when he considered the dispositions of his judges, men partially attached to his accuser, he deemed it more prudent to refer his cause to a higher court, where he knew he had friends, and should find protection<sup>17</sup>. Of this however he might have been aware, before he challenged Bernard to meet him at Sens, and provoked a public contest.—Others relate that, he was apprehensive of a popular tumult, which might endanger his life, and saw no better means of escaping than by appealing to Rome<sup>18</sup>.—In this last account, I believe, there may be truth. It accords with the timid heart of Abeillard; and besides, from the general complexion of the assembly, of which he could not competently judge, till his own eyes had witnessed it, there might be serious reason to fear that justice would not be done him. The treatment he had experienced from the council of Soissons, would now rise, in full force, upon his recollection; and when he beheld with what marks of religious veneration the person of Bernard was treated, and his words received, could he expect an impartial hearing? Conscious, however, as he was of his own innocence, had not his heart been timid as the hare's, he might have met,

<sup>16</sup> Godef. in vita Bern. l. iii. <sup>17</sup> Bern. Ep. ad Innocen.

<sup>18</sup> Otho. de gest. Frid.

it seems, the ill-founded charges of his antagonist, might have spoken, as he was so able, in his own defence, and have waited, with manliness, the sentence of the council.

The proceedings of the assembly were much disconcerted by the appeal of Abeillard. It was informal, they knew, as he had voluntarily submitted himself to their cognizance; but he had now referred his cause to the supreme court of judicature. After some debate, in which the opinions were much divided, it was finally agreed that, out of respect to Rome, the person of Abeillard should be spared, but that judgment should be pronounced on his opinions. The propositions, which Bernard had presented, were then read and examined: he himself spoke largely and with vehemence on the subject, and he proved, to the conviction of the meeting, from the authorities of the scriptures and of the ancient fathers, that they were not only false, but heretical. As such they were condemned. — The next step was to inform the bishop of Rome of their proceedings, to request the confirmation of their sentence, and to take every possible precaution that Abeillard should not find that support in Italy, on which he seemed to rely. This commission was intrusted to the abbot of Clairvaux<sup>19</sup>.

He entered with alacrity into the views of the

<sup>19</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.

BOOK VI. council, and it is clear that they chose an able agent. Nothing can be more artful, more severe, or more abusive, than the letters he wrote, on this occasion, to Rome. He wrote to his Holiness in the name of the archbishop of Sens and his suffragans, and in the name of the archbishop of Reims and the three prelates who accompanied him. In the first he details the transaction of the assembly, and he entreats him to impose silence on Abeillard, to forbid him either to teach or to write in future, and condemn his works; that by so doing he will draw the thorns out of the field of the church, and that it will again flourish and bear fruit. — The second is less prolix, and more violent. He treats Abeillard as a monster swelling with pride, who marches with an erect countenance, as if nothing were hidden from him, who pretends to penetrate the mysteries of faith, while, all he builds up, is a pile of errors. “ The  
 “ boasting of the man, he says, is the more  
 “ vain-glorious, because his book has found  
 “ readers in the Roman court. This has confirmed, and given energy to his rage. — We  
 “ have proceeded in the business as far as it  
 “ was expedient: it remains with you, most,  
 “ holy Father, to take care that, in your day  
 “ the beauty of the church be defiled by no  
 “ stain of heretical depravity.”



In his own name he then addresses the pontiff in two different letters. In the first he specifies the principal errors ascribed to Abeillard, and he refutes them. There is some address and logical acuteness in this attempt, with a large portion of declamation and of malevolent reflections. — The second is more reprehensible. He wishes his own speedy dissolution, on account of the evils which, on all sides, threaten. He had hoped, after the suppression of the late schism, caused by Peter de Leon, to have reposed from his labors; but that now as dangerous a storm was gathered round him. A new gospel, he says, has been forged for the christian people, and a new faith proposed to their belief: Abeillard of France has beckoned to the Italian, Arnold of Brescia, and they have come forward, in strict confederacy, to assail, with all their might, the religion of Christ. In their dress and diet they support the affectation of piety, and to deceive more easily, transform themselves into angels of light. He concludes: “ You who have succeeded to the chair of Peter must now consider, whether he who attacks the faith of that apostle, should find refuge in his see. Weigh your situation. Why were you raised over states and kingdoms, unless to root out, to destroy, to build up, and to plant? Schism you have extinguished: with the same arm, now crush these rising

BOOK "heresies, and your crown will be complet-  
VI. "ed"<sup>20</sup>."

It seems more probable that the other letters, which I mentioned as written to the Roman prelates before the council of Sens, should rather be referred to this period. The reader may recur to the extracts I gave, and to the reflections which accompanied them.

Thus did Bernard, true to his own character and to the views of the assembly, aim to vilify and render odious to the Roman court the name and principles of the man, who had appealed to its equity, and who was soon in person to appear before it. So intolerant, and so imposing even on the best minds, is religious zeal, when once it has passed those limits, which reason, humanity, and the gospel have opposed to its baneful spread!

The sentence  
against  
Abeillard.

The pope, roused by these strong expostulations, waited not for the arrival of Abeillard, but pronounced a definitive sentence on his works and person. Having remarked that, it is never allowed to bring those matters again into discussion, which have once been decided in councils, he adds, "With the advice of the bishops and  
" cardinals of our court, we have condemned the  
" articles, which were sent to us, and all the false  
" opinions of Peter Abeillard together with their

<sup>20</sup> Ep. 189.

“ author; and as a heretic we have imposed perpetual silence on him. We think also that all his followers and the abettors of his errors, should be cut off from the communion of the faithful.” — This was accompanied by another sentence, addressed to the two archbishops: “ We command you to confine, separately, in such monasteries, as you may deem best, Peter Abeillard and Arnold of Brescia, contrivers of erroneous doctrine, and impugnors of the catholic faith, and to burn their works, wherever they may be found <sup>21</sup>.”

How arbitrary are such proceedings! To condemn opinions, which the council of Sens had previously condemned, and which came before him in a form so obnoxious, might have been allowed to the Roman pontiff; but to censure the person of a man, who would soon be at his bar, and to condemn writings which he had never seen, was surely an unwarrantable stretch of ecclesiastical despotism.

Minutely to state the errors, of which the abbot of St. Gildas was accused, would be a useless and uninteresting labor. They were reduced to fourteen: — That there are degrees in the Trinity; that the Holy Ghost is not consubstantial with the Father and the Son; that the devil had never any power over man, and that Jesus Christ became

<sup>21</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv. p. 556.

BOOK  
VI.

man not to redeem, but to instruct us by his words and example, and that he suffered and died to manifest his love for man; that the Holy Ghost is the soul of the world; that Jesus Christ *God and man*, is not properly God; that we can will and do good by our own free will, without the help of grace; that in the sacrament of the Lord's supper the accidents of bread remain in the air; that the punishment, not the guilt, of original sin, is derived from Adam; that there is no sin, unless the sinner give his consent, and condemn God; that concupiscence, delight, and ignorance are the cause of no sin; that the suggestions of the devil are raised in man physically, by the contact of stones, plants, and other things, of which he knows the efficacy: that faith is the opinion or judgment we form of things invisible; that God can only do what he has done, and will do; that Jesus did not descend into hell<sup>22</sup>.

Such were these famous errors. Some of them might be contained in the expressions of Abeillard, and these he wished to explain; but the greatest part were the evident misconceptions of his adversaries. In his works might often be found uncommon language, and some extraordinary opinions: heterodoxy there was none, if the views and real sentiments of the author had been candidly weighed. But nothing, it has been observed, is so

<sup>22</sup> Nat. Alex. sæc. xii.



easy, as to descry errors where you wish to find them; and this will ever be, in the works and opinions of those, who may only seem to dissent from the multitude.

Berengarius, a scholar of Abeillard, a young man of some wit and learning, but petulant, abusive, and vain, wrote in defence of his master. His invective against Bernard is frothy and contemptible; and the fathers of the council of Sens he describes, as over-powered by wine and sleep, while they pronounced sentence on the supposed errors of Abeillard<sup>21</sup>.

The abbot of St. Gildas having precipitately retired from the council, did not immediately quit the neighbourhood of Sens. He waited for the result of their deliberations, which was soon notified to him: and now he saw the necessity of instantly beginning his journey. The inveterate spirit of his enemies, which had prompted them to act so harshly, would not desist, he might well know, in the first stage of their prosecution: their complaints and accusations might reach Rome before him.— Not much preparation was necessary; but old as he now was, having entered on his sixty-first year, and infirm, and afflicted, it was an arduous and irksome undertaking. On France, where he had suffered much, he could turn his

B O O K  
VI.

He sets out  
for Rome.

<sup>21</sup> Abeil. Op. p. 302.

BOOK

VI.

back without reluctance, and he flattered himself that Italy might be more propitious to his name. Friends, at least, he knew, he had in the Roman court; and there might be some consolation in the thought, that his eyes would soon behold the capital of the christian world.

Revolving in his mind the various events of an unhappy life, and dubious what might be the issue of his present enterprise, he journeyed slowly on. After some days, though he had made but little of his way, he felt his strength exhausted, and soon he was sensible that he must look for some hospitable roof, under which to repose his weary limbs. But could such a roof be found where the name of his adversary was so highly venerated? He recollected that Cluni, a celebrated monastery on the confines of Burgundy, was not very distant, and that Peter Maurice, to whom the appellation of *venerable* had been given, was abbot. He knew him not personally, but to his character he was no stranger. Peter was an honest man, his benevolence was proverbial, and he had a heart which could feel for the distresses of his brother. To ask for refreshment and a few days rest from such a man, could hardly give pain to a disposition the most falsely delicate. Abeillard redoubled his steps, and, without hesitation, entered the convent of Cluni<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Ep. Pet. Ven. p. 335.

He was met by the good abbot. — “My name, B O O K  
 “ said the traveller, is Peter Abeillard : I found VI.  
 “ your gates open, and I entered : I am in  
 “ distress.” — The venerable man would hear no  
 “ more ; it was not a moment for inquiries ; and  
 from the mention of his name he knew the respect  
 that was due to the stranger. He led him to his  
 apartments : whatever his situation demanded was  
 instantly provided ; and Abeillard blessed the kind  
 star which had conducted him to Cluni. In the  
 countenance and behaviour of his generous pro-  
 tector he read more goodness than even fame had  
 reported of him.

When repose, but more than that, the friendly  
 reception he had met with, had somewhat refreshed  
 the forlorn traveller, Peter, the next morning,  
 waited on him. “I am happy, said he, taking  
 “ Abeillard by the hand, to possess within these  
 “ walls a man ; of whose abilities and virtues I  
 “ have long heard so much ; but tell me ; from  
 “ whence come you, and whither are you  
 “ going ?” — “I come, replied Abeillard, from  
 “ Sens : a council, as you may know, has been  
 “ celebrated in that city : I have been charged  
 “ before it with opinions, which I never held : those  
 “ opinions they have condemned as heretical ;  
 “ and I have appealed to Rome. To Rome there-  
 “ fore I am now going”. — He then added many

2<sup>d</sup> Ep. Pet. Ven. p. 335.

BOOK  
VI.

other circumstances, informing him who had been his principal adversaries, and how cruelly he had been treated by them. — “I applaud your design, observed the abbot of Cluni: Rome is the asylum of the oppressed, and you do well to recur to its justice. Fear not that your grievances will not be heard, and be redressed: the stranger and the barbarian have found relief there.”—He requested, however, that he would not be precipitate; that he would take time to recruit his strength and spirits at Cluni; that he himself would consider, whether any other more efficacious measure could be adopted; and that his best endeavours should be exerted to serve him.

Abeillard acquiesced: the benevolent and persuasive manner of Peter was irresistible; and besides, how pleasing to his troubled mind would be the attention of the monks of Cluni, the friendship of their abbot, and the view of that content, harmony, and religious discipline which everywhere prevailed! The sight of those magnificent buildings, and of its august temple, would, moreover, diffuse a solemn stillness in his breast.—Cluni, at this time, after Mount Cassino in Italy, might be regarded as the most splendid monastery in the christian world. Its revenues were vast, and its edifices had the appearance of a well-built city. Three crowned heads, with their respective



courts, once lodged within the precincts, without moving a single monk from his apartments. A long succession of abbots, for more than two hundred years, eminent for their virtue and their learning, had given celebrity to its name. Of these Peter Maurice was the last, but he was not the least in merit, or in the estimation of an admiring public. The monks, whose number often exceeded two hundred, were not less worthy, less religious, or less learned, than had been their superiors<sup>26</sup>.—All these were circumstances of peculiar notice, and no mind could contemplate them with indifference.

In this charming situation, and in this society, Abeillard began to feel his mind grow lighter. He conversed with the monks, and he admired them: they were delighted by his exemplary deportment, his unaffected piety, his engaging manners, and his profound erudition. With the abbot he spent many hours: they discoursed on literary subjects, on the state of religion, and on the general complexion of the times. Abeillard related many events of his life; but they were all sad and sorrowful. To these Peter could oppose the brilliant series of his own years, which had been serene and prosperous. He did it without exultation, to cheer the drooping spirits of his friend, and

BOOK  
VI.

Is entertained at Cluni, and consents to remain there.

<sup>26</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.

B O O K VI. to attest his gratitude to heaven. He was born, he said, in Auvergne, and descended from the ancient family of Maurice or Montboissier; that when very young, agreeably to the wishes of his parents, who had devoted him to God, he had entered into the house of Cluni; that soon after he was promoted to the priory of Vezelay; and that, before he had reached his thirtieth year, he had been made abbot and general of his order. Far above his merit, he said, were these honors; but Rome had overlooked his imperfections, and his brethren had been indulgent to his weaknesses.

He related to him the extraordinary life and character of Pontius, his predecessor, from whom he had experienced a very singular opposition. He had been chosen the seventh abbot of Cluni, with very general approbation, and for some years had governed his order with a becoming moderation and wisdom. But he was a man of violent passions, vain, arrogant, presumptuous, and power did but serve to give them a greater energy. By degrees, the good-will of his monks was alienated from him: they charged him with many misdemeanors; that in his conduct there was an indecent levity, that he disregarded the advice of wise counsellors, and that he dissipated, in vain parade and feasting, the income of his monastery. These complaints were carried to the ears of the pontiff Callixtus. Pontius was irritated; but he turned

his rage against himself: he went to Rome, and petitioned to be released, from his office. The pope consented. Thus free to chuse a new profession, he put on the pilgrim's habit, and travelled to Jerusalem, firmly resolved, as he told his friends, there to end his days. He had been thirteen years abbot of Cluni.

BOOK  
VI.

Hardly had I been three years in office, continued Peter, when my predecessor, disgusted with Palestine, returned, through Italy, into France. His partisans received him cordially, and they spoke, in the highest strain, of the sanctity of his life: he wore iron hoops round his arms, they said; ate nothing, prayed incessantly, and that the foulest disorders vanished at his touch. I was then absent from Cluni, on some business of my order, in Aquitaine. Pontius for some time dissembled; he seemed unwilling to go to Cluni, but insensibly he approached it; and collecting round him some renegade monks and a few armed men, on a sudden he appeared before the gates. Bernard the prior and his monks were soon dispersed, and Pontius entered the convent at the head of his followers.

Of the few, whom he found within the walls, some he compelled by threats or torments, to swear obedience to him, and the refractory he expelled or threw into prison. The crosses, chalices, and every thing that was valuable, he melted down

BOOK to pay his soldiers, and to enrich his dependants.

VI. Nor would this satisfy him: he marched out at the head of armed parties against the castles and strong places belonging to the monastery, and the whole country he laid waste by fire and sword. For more than half a year did these devastations last; while Bernard and his faithful associates made the best defence they could, and intrepidly withstood the attacks and stratagems of the enemy.

I remained in Aquitaine. My presence, I thought, would only have increased the flame, and I was, indeed, little disposed, as I was little qualified, to make head against the martial and enterprising Pontius.—Soon after, a terrible anathema was pronounced against him by Rome; nevertheless, both parties were cited before that tribunal. I obeyed, and my antagonist soon followed. The day was fixed for our appearance; but as Pontius was an excommunicated man, he could not, agreeably to the canons, be admitted to the bar: notice was therefore sent to him, that he should prepare himself for absolution, by a due course of penance. He answered the messenger, that the power of excommunication belonged only to St. Peter, and that no mortal man possessed it.—I need not say, how much this haughty reply enraged the pontiff; the Roman people were struck with horror, and Pontius was proclaimed a schismatic.



The same message was then sent to his partisans. They were more tractable; they acknowledged their crimes; barefooted they entered the palace, and were absolved. Afterwards they were admitted to plead the cause of their master, though the indulgence was remarkable, and seldom had been heard a more groundless plea. — Our defence was then called for: we spoke, and were listened to with attention. — His holiness rose from his throne, and withdrew with his council, to weigh the merits of our cause. After some hours, he returned, resumed his seat, and the bishop of Porto was ordered to read the sentence. It was in these words: “The holy Roman church deposes, for ever, from all dignity and ecclesiastical functions, Pontius, the sacrilegious usurper, and the excommunicated schismatic; and restores Cluni, with its monks and possessions, to the present abbot, from whom they have been unjustly taken.”

The sentence had the desired effect: the disaffected members submitted to my authority, and the schism, in a moment, ceased. But the proud spirit of Pontius was unconquerable, and by order of the pope he was thrown into a dungeon. As we were preparing to return into France, we were all seized by a contagious malady, which then was rife in Rome. The unhappy prisoner was also seized. Chagrined and heated by intemperate

BOOK VI. exertions, he was not in a condition to withstand the raging fever, and he expired as he had lived, fearless and impenitent. The rest of us soon recovered <sup>27</sup>.

Thus in learned and entertaining intercourse, the hours passed. Peter was much pleased with his guest; he could discover nothing in his manners or conversation, which was not exemplary and improving; and it occurred to him that, could he detain him at Cluni, it might prove of much advantage to his subjects. Besides, he compassionated his sufferings, and was anxious to relieve them. The matter however was delicate, and it required some address to propose it in terms which might not be offensive. Abeillard was an abbot, a man of high reputation, and his fame was suffering from imputations, which, it seemed, could only be cancelled at the bar of Rome.

In the mean time arrived at Cluni Rainardus, abbot of Citeaux, and general of the Cistercian order of monks. He came, it appears, on the laudable and humane business, of effecting a reconciliation between Abeillard and St. Bernard <sup>28</sup>. The latter was his subject; and probably the violent manner, in which he had conducted the prosecution against the abbot of St. Gildas, had not met his approbation. Rainardus was a man of great

<sup>27</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.      <sup>28</sup> Ep. Pet. Ven. p. 336.

mildness, piety, and erudition. He opened his design to Peter, and begged his concurrence. No measure could be more agreeable to the character of his good heart, and together they waited on Abeillard.

I am come, said the abbot of Citeaux, after the first salutations were over, to propose to you an accommodation with my brother Bernard. — I was ever a friend to peace, replied Abeillard, and have been forced into the present measures by the violence of the man, whose name you have mentioned, and for whose virtues I otherwise entertain the highest respect. Indeed I have been ill-used. — Will you go along with me then to Clairvaux? inquired Rainardus: there we shall find Bernard, and I have no doubt but, in the first interview, every cause of dissension will be at once removed. — Abeillard thanked him for his kindness, but hesitated to give a direct answer to his proposal; besides, continued he, I am on my journey to Rome, and can defer it no longer. — You must, my friend, go to Clairvaux, said the abbot of Cluni, interrupting him; and as for your journey to Italy, it is not so pressing, and may as well be undertaken after your return. — I can oppose your wishes no longer, observed Abeillard, if you really think, that the cause of peace, or my own reputation, can be benefited by my compliance. — The abbots applauded his disposition, and then

## BOOK

## VI.

observed that, as he had never had any other intention, than to promote truth and to serve his neighbour, he could have no difficulty to retract or to amend any expressions, either in his discourses or in his writings, which had been judged reprehensible. — Such have ever been my dispositions, replied Abeillard<sup>29</sup>.

The abbot of Cluni wished them all success in their undertaking, and they departed for Clairvaux. We know not the particulars of the interview, only that, after matters had been properly explained, on both sides, a sincere reconciliation took place betwixt Abeillard and Bernard. The abbot of St. Gildas then returned to Cluni, where Peter, in anxious expectation, waited his coming, and his heart was gladdened with the news.

But it was now reported, and the report was soon confirmed that, in consequence of the letters Bernard had dispatched to Rome, a sentence, such as has been mentioned, had been pronounced against Abeillard. Moderate men were struck by the intemperate and irregular transaction, and no one so much as Peter of Cluni; but out of the evil, he thought, good might be drawn: Abeillard perhaps might now be induced to accede to the proposal, he had for some time revolved in his mind, and take up his residence in the monastery of Cluni.

<sup>29</sup> Ep. Pet. Ven. p. 336.



Abeillard was not prepared for the unexpected shock. He had appealed to the equity of Rome, was hastening to submit himself to its decision, and had just been reconciled to the leading prosecutor. Unheard he found himself sentenced to silence and imprisonment, his works condemned to the flames, his opinions anathematized, and his name conjoined, by an infamous stigma, with that of Arnold of Brescia. Peter in vain offered him comfort: his case was almost unprecedented in the annals of persecution, and he would not add to his pain by attempting to extenuate the bad conduct of his enemies. From himself, his experience of human malevolence, and his ready submission to the will of heaven, he concluded, the best resources might be derived on this trying occasion: to them he would leave him, and wait till reflection had worn off the edge of resentment.

Habituated as the mind of Abeillard had been to ill usage, it seemed sooner to recover from the shock. The friendship of Peter Maurice, the sympathizing deportment of his monks, and the holy retirement of the place, all contributed to still the agitation of his heart. The abbot, with joy perceived the effect, and would not lose the happy moment.—

“ Abeillard, said he to him, you must not leave us. Can you submit to remain at Cluni? The late event, which we viewed as a disaster, was perhaps meant to promote your felicity, and

BOOK VI. “ours conjointly with it. There is not an inhabitant  
 “under this roof, who does not wish to be longer  
 “edified by your example, and improved by  
 “your instruction.” — Abeillard remained silent:  
 the benevolence of his protector, and the sudden  
 proposal, seemed to overpower him. “Your  
 “kindness, said he at last, I feel like balm upon  
 “my mind; and how flattering is the goodness  
 “of your monks! But you know, it is not in my  
 “power to accept your generous offer: I have  
 “myself an abbey to attend to, to which I must re-  
 “turn, if my enemies will allow it. Besides, this fatal  
 “sentence, which has been pronounced against  
 “me, has cast me out from the society of christians:  
 “in the horrors of a prison must my remaining  
 “melancholy days be consumed.” — “I will make  
 “your peace with Rome, rejoined the abbot ear-  
 “nestly, and procure permission for you to remain  
 “at Cluni, if you will give me your consent.” —  
 A request so reasonable, and withal so soothing  
 to his distressful situation, could not be  
 refused. Abeillard embraced his friend, and they  
 parted<sup>30</sup>.

The venerable man, without delay, wrote to  
 the Roman bishop. He begins his letter by relating  
 the circumstances, which the reader has just heard,  
 for they are taken from this letter, and when he

<sup>30</sup> Ep. Pet. Cluniac. Vie d'Abeil. p. 144. &c.

comes to the main subject of his petition, he says: BOOK  
 “ Induced by my advice, or rather, I think, in- VI.  
 “ spired by heaven, he has chosen to relinquish  
 “ the tumultuary scenes of scholastic studies and  
 “ disputation, and with us to take up his last  
 “ abode at Cluni. His age, his infirmities, his piety,  
 “ affected me much, and also I was led to believe  
 “ that his learning, to which your holiness is no  
 “ stranger, might be rendered very serviceable to  
 “ the crowds of young men, who inhabit these  
 “ cloisters. It is now your approbation only which  
 “ we wait for. Grant it, therefore, we humbly  
 “ intreat you. I request it, I, the meanest of your  
 “ servants, and the abbey of Cluni, ever devoted  
 “ to you, joins my petition; let the voice of  
 “ Abeillard be heard with ours; it is his prayer  
 “ that the remaining days of an unhappy life,  
 “ which perhaps are but few, he may be com-  
 “ manded to spend at Cluni. Like the sparrow he  
 “ has chosen this habitation, and like the plaintive  
 “ turtle, he rejoices here to have built his nest.  
 “ May no opposition disturb his rest, no violence  
 “ intrude on his retirement. You who are the  
 “ guardian of the good and virtuous, and who  
 “ once loved Abeillard, will take him under the  
 “ shield of your apostolical protection.

A messenger was dispatched with this letter to Rome, and Abeillard, composed and submissive

BOOK VI. waiting his return, once more gave his mind to study, and to the occupations of retirement and literary ease. Here I shall leave him: other matters call for notice, which, agreeably to my plan, must not be omitted.

Arnold of  
Brescia.

Among the extraordinary characters, which illustrated or disgraced this period, none drew after it more observation, than that of Arnold, whose name has been more than once mentioned, born at Brescia, a town in the Venetian territories. When young he quitted his native country, and travelling into France, became a scholar of Peter Abeillard. What proficiency he made in science, is not said; but his contemporaries describe him as a man endowed with no uncommon abilities, possessing a great fluency of language with little judgment, fond of novelties and of opinions the most paradoxical<sup>31</sup>. After many years residence in France he returned to Italy. — Arnold was soon sensible, that celebrity was not to be obtained by ordinary means, and his dispositions were little formed to pursue the beaten paths of life: to collect a party, to give his name to a sect, or to attack the rich and powerful, were ideas before which his mind expanded. Objects could not be long wanting for the exercise of his wildest ambition. He viewed the depraved manners and the

<sup>31</sup> Ott. Frising. l. 11. Gunth. Ligur. l. 3.



intemperate lives of the monks and clergy, and against them he would direct the severest opposition. His cause, he well knew, would be popular, and the better, under the guise of sanctity, to effect his purpose, he threw over his shoulders, the austere dress of a religious man.

BOOK  
VI.

Thus habited, Arnold opened his invective in the streets of Brescia. The people crowded round him. He told them he was sent to reform abuses, to pull down the proud, and to exalt the humble. He then pointed his declamation against the bishops, against the clergy, against the monks, and finally against the Roman pontiff himself: to the laity only he was indulgent, and them even he flattered in their crimes. Churchmen, said he, who hold benefices, bishops who have domains, and monks that have possessions, will all be damned.—His hearers shouted approbation.—These things, continued he, belong to the prince, he may give them to whom he pleases, but he must give them to the laity. It is on their tithes and the voluntary contributions of the people that those sons of God must live: they must be frugal, continent, and mortified.

Thus does Guntherus of Liguria, a very elegant poet of the age, speak of Arnold and his preaching:

*Tandem natalibus oris*

*Redditus, assumpta sapientis fronte, disertis*

*Fallēbat sermone rudes; celerumque precaci*

## BOOK

## VI.

Infectans odio, monachorum acerrimus hostis,  
 Plebis adulator, gaudens popularibus auris,  
 Pontifices, ipsamque gravi corrodere lingua  
 Audebat papam; scelerataque dogmata vulgo  
 Diffundens, variis implebat vocibus aures.

Lib. 2.

The church of Brescia was soon thrown into the greatest confusion, and the people, already prejudiced against their ministers, threatened to overturn their altars. The sacred writings he had the address to urge in support of his assertions, and from them he denounced the vengeance of heaven against the violators of the law. Indeed, nothing could be more glaringly offensive, than the ostentatious parade of the bishops and great abbots, and the soft and licentious lives of the monks and clergy; but Arnold, in his declamation, far exceeded the bounds of truth.

Pontificum fastus, abbatum denique laxos  
 Damnat penitus mores, monachosque superbos.  
 Veraque multa quidem, nisi tempora nostra fideles  
 Respuerent monitus, falsis admixta monebat.  
 Et fateor, pulchram fallendi noverat artem,  
 Veris falsa probans; quia tantum falsa loquendo  
 Fallere nemo potest.

In 1139 was celebrated a grand council at Rome. Arnold was cited to appear before it. His accusers were the bishop of Brescia, and many others, whom he had ridiculed and insulted. Nor from his judges could he look for much indulgence. He

was found guilty, and sentenced to perpetual silence. Considering his crime, this surely was a gentle punishment. But Arnold, whose highest ambition lay in the free use of words, viewed it, possibly, in a less partial light: he therefore instantly left Italy, crossed the Alps, and sat down at Zurich, where he dogmatized with new virulence and great success.

BOOK

VI.

*Territus, & miseræ confusus imagine culpæ,  
Fugit ab urbe sua, transalpinisque receptus,  
Qua sibi vicinas Alemannia suspicit alpes,  
Nobile Turegum, doctoris nomine falso,  
Insedit, totamque brevi sub tempore terram  
Perfidus impuri foedavit dogmatis aura.*

Though Arnold had quitted Italy, yet had his opinions taken deep root, and Rome itself was infected by them. Irritated by the conduct of their master, Innocent the second, the Roman people assembled in the Capitol. It was proposed that the power of the pontiff, which they called exorbitant, should be restrained: this was carried; when suddenly, inspired as it were by the genius of the place, they moved that the senate, which for years had been abolished, should be restored. The proposition was received with the loudest acclamations. Innocent in vain opposed the bold design; there was a magic in it which spread irresistibly, and for a moment seemed to rouse the fallen

BOOK VI. spirit of the nation. The pope viewed with horror the reverse of fortune which threatened the tiara; to be shorn of his mighty power, and to become the mere shepherd of the christian people, was a thought too allicting: he fell sick, and died<sup>31</sup>.

Under his two immediate successors, Celestin and Lucius, whose reigns were but of a few months, the Romans pursued their darling object. They waited on the latter, and, in an imperious tone, demanded the restitution of all the honors and civil rights, which had been usurped from the people. The prince of the senate, said they, whom we have chosen, will best administer the important trust: the tithes and offerings of the faithful will sufficiently answer all the exigencies of your holiness: it was thus that our ancient bishops lived. — Lucius had recourse to Conrad, the king of the Romans: and at the same time, the malecontents sent an embassy to him, offering him their empire, and requesting that he would march to their assistance. To this invitation Conrad gave no attention; he viewed it as an attempt, at once wild and licentious: but to the pope's deputies he showed every mark of esteem. Lucius survived this event but a few days.

Eugenius the third was his successor, the friend and disciple of the renowned Bernard. The night

<sup>31</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.



before his consecration the senators assembled, and it was agreed, that either he should solemnly confirm all their proceedings, or they would annul his election. This resolution was notified to him. He called together his friends; and it was their advice, that he should neither accede to the extravagant demand, nor expose himself, by a refusal, to the fury of the populace. He therefore silently withdrew from Rome, and retired to a neighbouring fortress. Here the ceremony of his consecration was performed.

Arnold who, in banishment, had contemplated the effect of his admonitions on the minds of the Romans, and the success which seemed to follow their exertions, was now informed that the pope had retired, and that the gates of the capital were open to receive him: it was likewise suggested to him, that his presence was more than ever necessary, to give energy to their resolves, form to their plans, and stability to their undertakings. Arnold took fire at the news; an unusual swell of enthusiasm filled his breast; and he fancied that, like Junius Brutus, he was called on once more to give liberty to Rome. — At his appearance a new stream of vigor animated the citizens; they called him their friend and their deliverer. The Brescian walked amongst them? his deportment was humble, his countenance emaciated, his address affable, and

BOOK  
VI.

B O O K VI. he spoke to them of moderation, of submission, of obedience.—With the nobles and new senators he held another language; though to them also he was mild and diffident, speaking much of virtue and of respect for religion and the laws”.

But no sooner was he sensible of his own real influence, and saw the lengths to which the revolters had already carried their designs, than he threw aside the mask, and appeared in his own character, daring, impetuous, self-sufficient, vain. He harangued the people; he talked of their forefathers, the ancient Romans, who, by the wisdom of their senate, and the valor of their armies, had conquered nations, and subdued the earth. He dwelt on the names and the achievements of the Bruti, the Gracchi, and the Scipios; and of these men, said he, are you not the children? He advised, that the Capitol be instantly repaired, that the equestrian order be restored, that the people have their tribunes, that dignity attend the senate, and that the laws, which had been silent and neglected, be revived in all their vigor. He spoke of the pope, as of a deposed and banished tyrant: “But should you again  
“be disposed, continued he, to admit him  
“within these walls; first fix your own rights,  
“and determine his. He is but your bishop;

” Bern. Ep. 195, 196.

“ let him therefore have his spiritual jurisdiction. The government of Rome, its civil establishments, and its territories, belong to you. These you will keep, if you have the spirit of men, and the hearts of Romans<sup>34</sup>. ”

B O O K

VI.

Quin etiam titulos urbis renovare vetustos,  
 Patricios recreare viros, priscosque quirites,  
 Nomine plebeio fecernere nomen equestre,  
 Jura tribunorum, sanctum reparare senatum,  
 Et senio fessas, mutasque reponere leges;  
 Lapsa ruinosis & adhuc pendentia muris  
 Reddere primævo Capitolia prisca nitore:  
 Suadebat populo.

Lib. 3.

Fired by this harangue, the people, headed by the most disaffected of the nobles, publicly attacked the few cardinals and churchmen, who remained in the city; they set fire to the palaces; and they compelled the citizens to swear obedience to the new government. Moderate men who saw the folly of the attempt, were shocked at these excesses of popular phrenzy; but it was vain to oppose the torrent: they submitted, looking forward, with some curiosity, to the termination of an event, which had begun in extravagance, and must end in disappointment.

<sup>34</sup> Ott. Frising. lib. ii.

BOOK

VI.

Eugenius till now had viewed, with some concern, the wild derangement of his people; but when it seemed, that their eyes opened to their own excesses, he could be inactive no longer. He excommunicated the ringleaders of the faction, and at the head of his troops, who were chiefly composed of Tiburtini, a people always hostile to the Romans, he marched against the enemy. His friends, within the walls, who were numerous, co-operated with his designs, and in a few days overtures for peace were made to the pontiff. He acceded to them, but on condition, that they should annul the arrangements they had made, and if they would have senators, that they should acknowledge all their power was from him. The people were satisfied, and they threw open the gates, through which Eugenius entered, among the acclamations of a fawning and inconstant multitude. — Before this event Arnold had retired; but he left behind him many friends strongly attached to his person and principles.

We hear little more of this enthusiast, for such he was, till the reign of Adrian, our countryman, when, on account of fresh tumults, he and his adherents were excommunicated, and Rome was threatened with an interdict, unless they expelled the whole party from their walls.



This they did. The Arnolds retired with their champion into Tuscany, where he was received as a prophet, and honored as a saint. His enemies, however, prevailed: he was made prisoner, and conducted, under a strong escort, to Rome. In vain was great interest made to save his life; he was condemned and executed, and his ashes thrown into the Tiber, lest the people should collect his remains, and venerate them as the relics of a fainted martyr<sup>35</sup>.

Such was Arnold of Brescia, a man, whose character, whose principles, and whose views, we perhaps should be disposed to admire, had his life been recorded by unprejudiced historians, and not brought down to us drawn in the blackest colors, which party, bigoted zeal, and enthusiasm could lay on. He was rash, mis-judging, and intemperate, or never would he have engaged in so unequal a contest. — The view of such a phenomenon in the twelfth century excites a pleasing admiration. To attack the Roman pontiff and his clergy in the very centre of their power, required a more than common share of fortitude; to adopt a settled scheme of restoring to its pristine glory the republic of Rome, demanded a stretch of thought, com-

<sup>35</sup> Fleury, vol. xv.

**B O O K** prehensive and enterprising ; and to forego the  
**VI.** ease and indulgence of a dissipated age , for the reformation of manners and the suppression of what he thought usurped dominion, argued a character of mind, disinterested, generous, and benevolent. But Arnold, like other reformers, went too far ; and passion soon vitiated undertakings, which were begun perhaps with motives the most laudable.—The readiness, with which the Roman people embraced his plan of lowering the jurisdiction of the pontiff, and restraining it within those bounds, which the true spirit of christianity had fixed, at once shows, that they could reason justly, and that they considered the unbounded sway of the triple crown, to which reluctantly they submitted, as an assumed prerogative, to which violence or misconstruction, and not christian right, had given efficacy.

Tanchelm of  
 Antwerp.

Tanchelm or Tanchelin was another of those extraordinary apostles, who, about this period, attracted very general notice. He also was a man, as his historians represent him, who, under the imposing air of austerity and mortification, of abstemiousness from pleasure and an animated zeal against the vices of churchmen, gained a wondrous ascendancy over the minds of the people. He opened his mission therefore by preaching against the disorders of the age. He was artful and

insinuating, and though a laic, possessed knowledge, and a flow of eloquence which was rapid and imposing.—Antwerp was then a great and flourishing city; but its vices were exuberant, and the torrent had spread itself into the adjacent countries. Here Tanchelm preached. He inveighed against the excesses of the great and opulent. The people listened with wonder. He courted their attention, and flattered their humor. He could then proceed to greater lengths: they were ignorant, he found, and uninstructed, and were therefore disposed to take whatever doctrines, he should lay before them. He talked of the pope, of bishops, and of the clergy, as of men, who had intruded themselves into the ministry of religion, to enjoy their ease, and to cajole the people: the sacraments he represented as profane and useless ceremonies, and the supper of our Lord as of no avail to salvation: and in himself and in his followers, he concluded, dwelt the whole spirit of the church.

It was now time to make a more splendid figure: hitherto, his appearance had been lowly, and his discourse modest. He decorated his cloths with gold, and his hair with jewels, and surrounded by a guard of three thousand men, he advanced among their acclamations, preceded by a standard and a naked sword. Thus escorted he preached

BOOK  
VI.

in the open fields, and his words were received as oracles from heaven; nor could they be withstood; carnage and devastation marked his progress wherever opposition was made to his designs.—I speak not of the abominations, he is said, to have committed, nor of the atrocious disorders which his principles, are also said, to have recommended and sanctified. The enemies, of orthodoxy have often been charged with crimes, which to have committed coolly and systematically, seems not to have come within the sphere of human depravity. It is more probable, because more possible, that their adversaries, though good and well-intentioned men, defamed their conduct, and mis-judged their principles. In the clash of two opinions the most probable must be chosen.

Emboldened by success, Tanchelm raised his views to higher honors. He dared to tell the people that he was God. “Jesus Christ, said he, took divinity to himself, because the plenitude of the Holy Spirit came upon him; I have received the same spirit, therefore am I equal to him.” The people believed him, and fell prostrate at his feet.—To enhance the glory of his divinity, he entertained magnificently the crowds, which followed him; and joy, merriment, and pleasure gave a zest to



religion, which it had not known before. They who could approach his person, felt a glow of inspiration in their breasts; the ground on which he had trodden was deemed holy; and the water, in which he had bathed, they preserved as a relic of inestimable value: it supported health, and expelled the most inveterate disorders.

BOOK  
VI.

To defray his expenses, which were great, Tanchelm had recourse to every device; but the liberality of his friends began to slacken. His invention, however, was not exhausted. He ordered a large statue of the Virgin Mary to be brought out among the people: Tanchelm then advanced up to it; he touched her hand, and pronounced the words which are used at the marriage ceremony. "You see, said he, what I have done; I have married this virgin: it is now your duty to make the customary presents."—Two boxes were then placed, one for the men, the other for the women, on each side of the image.—"Now shall we discover, continued he, which of you entertain the sincerest regard for me and my wife."—It was a contest of love and benevolence; but the women seemed to carry it: they tore the ornaments from their heads, the collars from their necks, and the rings from their ears.

## BOOK

## VI.

When the impostor, by such uncommon arts, had spread his influence and opinions over many provinces of Flanders, he meditated greater conquests. It is said, that he thought of going to Rome itself, there to oppose his *divinity* against the mighty power of the pontiff. But as, one day, he was entering into a boat, which was to carry him on some religious expedition, a good priest aimed a blow at his head, which put a final period to all his greatness. His opinions, however, survived him, and his disciples, in spite of opposition, multiplied and maintained their tenets. Against them, Norbert of Premontre, of whom already I have spoken, was sent, and he successfully performed his commission, by preaching, by miracles, and by a display of the most exalted virtues<sup>36</sup>.

To account for the extreme animosity with which these, and other sectaries of the age, were actuated against the ministers of the church, certain circumstances must be duly considered. It is not without a cause that violent passions are excited. France, about a century before, had been inundated by various sects, which went under the common denomination of Manicheans. They were treated with unexampled severity, and many had been burned in the different provinces of the kingdom. Persecution made them more circumspect, but it also inflamed their hatred

<sup>36</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv. Nat. Alex.

against the clergy, who had been the principal agents in their oppression, and whose zeal had unsheathed the magistrate's sword against them. From the ashes of the dead, as it ever happens, rose a vindictive race, on whose minds grew the early impression that they must revenge their own, and their fathers cause. It was hence their leading object to insult and vilify the priesthood, and whatever was of a nature to give them respect and consideration, in the eyes of the people, that they attacked with peculiar virulence: such was the administration of the sacraments and their efficacy, the ceremonies of the church, prayers for the living and the dead, the order of priesthood, the Lord's supper, and the authority of the first pastors of the church.

The disorders and ignorance of the clergy were; besides, extreme: This has been already observed, the offices in the church were venal; the sacraments were administered by men, whom simony had corrupted, and concubinage debased; and the momentous truths of religion and morality were sunk in idle ceremony and vile superstition. — This is the dark side of the object. — Governed by such rulers, the people were ignorant, were brutal, were head-strong; nor could they have respect for those, to support whose excesses they contributed much of their substance, and from whom, in

BOOK  
VI.

**BOOK VI.** return, they received imperious words and unfeeling treatment. They would be ready to rebel, and to pull down these proud and useless ministers. A head only was wanting; and he who had courage, had some learning, was eloquent, and had address to manage the wayward passions of the multitude, might lead them to the wildest measures, and become their friend, their master, their general, and their prophet<sup>37</sup>. Such were Arnold of Brescia and Tanchelm, and such was Henry de Bruys, in nothing inferior to either.

**Henry de Bruys.** Henry was in France, what his contemporaries, whom I have described, were in Italy and in Flanders; he was the disciple of Peter de Bruys, who had shown him the way, and had taught him the maxims, which he himself had practised, and sealed with his blood. The errors of Peter were, that infant baptism was useless, because it was necessary they should make an act of faith, and receive instructions — that churches, altars, and all material buildings, disgraced the service of God, and should be destroyed — that the cross was an implement of superstition, and should be broken and trodden under foot — that the sacrifice of the mass was an idle ceremony, and ought not to be celebrated — and that alms, prayers, or

<sup>37</sup> Dict. des Hérésies, p. 484.



other good works, offered for the dead, availed them nothing. BOOK  
VI.

Peter was violent and head-strong, and these doctrines, which he might have propagated by gentle means, he would force on his countrymen by outrages and bloodshed. The southern provinces of France were the theatre of his excesses. He re-baptized the people, pillaged the churches, overturned the altars, burned the crosses, tortured the ministers, and forced the monks by threats and blows, to take wives, or to perish in dungeons. — So relates Peter the venerable, the man of benevolence and moderation, from what his own eyes had witnessed; and he it was, who principally opposed himself to the progress of the proud reformer<sup>38</sup>. — Peter was at last seized by the irritated people, before whom, on Good-Friday, he had lighted up a large bonfire of crosses, and having broiled some meat before it, invited the spectators to partake of his meal: they threw him into the flames, and he was consumed.

His friend Henry was warned by the example. He had adopted all the opinions of his master, and had added to them of his own: of these the principal were, that spiritual songs are an insult to the Deity, that he only delights in pious affections, that he is not invoked by

<sup>38</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

## BOOK

## VI.

loud vociferation, nor soothed by the harmony of music". — The idea was gloomy; it had little else in it that was censurable. — The violence with which Peter had enforced his doctrine, seemed not to agree with the dispositions of Henry; he therefore adopted another method, which was that of insinuation and persuasive eloquence.

The description given of his person and way of life, by a contemporary writer, when he was young, and first appeared in the diocese of Mans, is not incurious. "About this time, says he, came  
 " from the neighbouring provinces a certain  
 " hypocrite, whose actions, morals, opinions,  
 " rendered deserving of the severest punishments.  
 " He was young, but he wore his hair short, and  
 " his beard unshorn; he was tall in stature, moved  
 " quick, and his feet, in the rigor of winter,  
 " were naked; his countenance and eyes were  
 " agitated as the raging sea; he spoke rapidly, and  
 " his voice was loud as the howling billows. In  
 " his dress he was negligent and filthy, nor did  
 " he live like other men: he frequented, for his  
 " meals, the houses of the meanest citizens; chose  
 " for his abode, during the day, the porches of  
 " his friends habitations, and slept in the most

" Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

“ exposed and inclement places. But he soon  
 “ acquired the reputation of a saint: the ladies,  
 “ in particular, extolled his virtues; they said,  
 “ he had the spirit of a prophet, that he could  
 “ read the interior of their minds, and tell their  
 “ secret sins.” And well he might, if it be  
 true, what the same author relates of his familiar  
 conversation with them.

BOOK  
 VI.

In this diocese, so great was the fame of his  
 virtues, Henry obtained permission to preach to  
 the people. They flocked to him, and the  
 clergy even exhorted them to it. He mounted  
 the tribunal, which had been prepared for him;  
 his voice sounded like the thunder from heaven;  
 and they drank down his words with rapture.  
 Soon was the multitude convinced that he was a  
 man divinely sent; and when Henry perceived  
 the impression, he seized the moment, and laid  
 before them his own favorite opinions. But his  
 main drift was to instil into their minds an  
 aversion for their ministers, and to rouse them  
 more to acts of violence and fury. The event  
 more than answered his most sanguine wishes, and  
 the clergy were soon sensible how miserably they  
 had been deluded.

\*\* Chronic. Cenoman. in Nat. Alex.

## BOOK

## VI.

The people came from his discourses, disturbed in their belief, and drunk with enthusiasm. They attacked their priests, and insulted the clergy, refusing to sell even the common necessities to their domestics: they threatened to destroy their houses, to pillage their goods; and from menaces would have proceeded to every act of violence, had not the count of Mans, and the principal nobility, opposed the outrageous current of their phrenzy.

In the mean time, Hildebert, the bishop, who had been absent, returned from Rome. He was astonished at the change in his flock; for, instead of the respect, which ever before he had experienced from them, they insultingly refused his blessing, shouted the name of Henry in his ears, threw dirt at the clergy who accompanied him, and abused them in the most petulant and opprobrious language. But Hildebert was a cool and experienced man, and by gentle means so far opened the eyes of his people, that Henry thought proper to withdraw, and to look for new friends, in the provinces of Languedoc and Provence, where Peter had made so rich a harvest.

Eugenius of Rome, of whom I have spoken, was not slow in sending a proper force against him. Bernard entered the lists, but the crafty impostor declined the contest. He retired;



search was made, and he was taken. We hear no more of him, only that he was delivered to the bishop of Toulouse, who threw him into prison, where probably he died."

It is in such men as these, and in their opinions, that protestant writers have looked for that chain of tradition, by which the doctrine they profess, may have been brought down to them". It may be so; but providence, it seems, must have chosen extraordinary vehicles for the conveyance of his most important documents to man. I am, however, very ready to believe, as I have before noticed, that much of the accounts, which are recorded of them is extremely fallacious and over-charged. But where may we look for other sources of information, out of which to form a more prudent judgment, and whereby the writings of their contemporaries, a Bernard and a Peter the venerable, may be corrected and reformed? To the reader also the reflection must ever recur, that, as the opinions which these men supported, were uniformly and steadily opposed, as soon as they were made public, there must have been *novelty*, at least, in them, and consequently that they were not parts of that ancient and authentic doctrine,

<sup>41</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv.

<sup>42</sup> Bagnage, Hist. des Egl. Réf.

BOOK on which time and authority had stamped their  
VI. venerable seal.

Other men there were, about this period, whose characters were almost as deserving of notice, as these I have mentioned; but enough has been said to answer the object I have in view, and Abeillard, of whom I must soon take my last farewell, again calls me to Cluni.

END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE LIVES OF  
ABEILLARD and HELOISA.

BOOK VII.

*Abeillard writes two apologies—His life at Cluni—  
He falls sick—And dies at St. Marcellus—His  
character—The abbot of Cluni writes an account  
of his death to Heloisa—She requests his body,  
and obtains it—Writes to Peter the venerable—  
His answer—Innocent II.—Eugenius III.—  
Adrian IV.—State of England—State of France—  
The second crusade—Death and character of  
Suger—of Bernard—of Peter the venerable—  
Heloisa—Her death.*

Anno, 1141.

IF the reader be not a whimsical man, and therefore fond of exotic characters, he will leave, without regret, the new company, to which I had introduced him, and rejoice once more to meet Abeillard and his venerable friend.

BOOK  
VII.

## B O O K

## VII.

He writes two  
apologies.

Having consented to remain at Cluni, could permission be obtained from Rome, Abeillard, resigned to the will of heaven, composed his agitated thoughts, and sought for comfort in the occupations of prayer and study, to which the genius of the place and his own propensions called him. Peter Maurice was much pleased by the calm resignation of his guest, and he let pass no occasion of giving it stability by every means in his power. He suggested various expedients for filling up the irksome moments of suspense, till his messenger should return, and one day proposed to him the propriety of writing an apology, or a profession of his real opinions, which might be given to the world. "Your sentiments, said he, have been mistaken or misrepresented; you know the charges that are against you; state then your belief, in terms, clear, precise, and unequivocal. It will silence your enemies, and give joy to your friends. Besides, do not your own honor, and the love of truth, exact it from you?"—Abeillard saw the propriety of the measure, and thanked his kind adviser. His mind had long been a stranger to the voice of friendship, and it now fell, soothing as the dew from heaven upon a parched soil.

The opening of his apology is submissive, but manly, and shows how little he deserved the



harsh treatment, he had experienced. It is addressed to the universal church. — “ The observation, “ says he, is well known, that the most accurate “ expressions can be easily perverted, and that he “ who writes much only adds to the number of “ his judges. But I who have written little, and “ in comparison of many others, almost nothing, “ have not escaped censure; though where I am “ most heavily charged, God knows, I am not “ conscious of any fault; nor, were there any, “ would I defend it with obstinacy. Inadvertently “ I may have written what should not have been “ said; but heaven is my witness, and I appeal “ to it, that I have uttered nothing from malice, “ nothing from pride of heart. In the schools I “ often spoke to thousands, but it was not surrep- “ titiously; what I thought might tend to the “ elucidation of truth and the progress of morality, “ that I publicly delivered; and what I have “ written, that I freely laid before the public, “ not to make proselytes to my opinions, but “ that they might judge them. If I have exceeded “ in discourse, which may have happened, ever “ have I been disposed to amend or to retract “ my expressions: and in this resolution I will abide “ to the end. How then can I be deemed a heretic? “ —But as it is my duty to correct my errors, if “ any there be; so will it become me to repel “ such, as have been falsely imputed to me. I

BOOK

VII.

“ know that purposely, we should not rouse the  
 “ tongues of the malevolent against us, and when  
 “ by their own malice they are in motion, we  
 “ should bear it patiently: sometimes however we  
 “ may be allowed to silence them, lest, by their  
 “ evil reports, they corrupt the minds of those,  
 “ who might draw good from our instructions.—  
 “ Be convinced then, my brethren that I, an un-  
 “ worthy son as I am of the church, do believe  
 “ all that she believes, do reject all that she rejects.  
 “ The unity of faith I have never violated, though  
 “ in conduct, I know, I am the last of her  
 “ children’.”

He then proceeds to an explicit declaration of his faith, on such points as had been censured; than which nothing can be more orthodox, whether it be tried by the test of modern belief in the catholic church, or by the more ancient creeds of the primitive ages.—Peter approved much of his apology, and it was soon dispersed among the churches of France.

While the abbot of St. Gildas was engaged in this laudable work, he heard that Heloisa and her nuns at the Paraclet were much alarmed at what had happened. The dangers in which he was involved, distressed them; and besides, a thousand anxious thoughts disturbed their minds. It was natural, when they heard of the condemnation of his opinions at Sens, and read the sentence of the

<sup>2</sup> Op. Abeil. p. 330.

Roman court against him, that they should tremble for themselves. If their master was a heretic; how could they be orthodox, who had taken all their opinions from him, and who venerated him as the oracle of truth? His sermons were read in their church, and his other works were seldom out of their hands. — Abeillard felt for their situation, and wished to relieve it. The apology he had just written would well answer the purpose, but he was disposed to do it by a more personal address. He therefore wrote to Heloisa.

“ It is the study of philosophy, says he to her,  
 “ which has prejudiced the world against me. My  
 “ enemies allow that, in this science, I am excel-  
 “ lent, but that I know little of the doctrine of  
 “ Paul. They commend the acuteness of my  
 “ talents, and take from me the purity of a christian  
 “ believer. They are led away rather by surmise,  
 “ than by any experience of my opinions. I have  
 “ no ambition to be a philosopher in opposition  
 “ to Paul, or to postpone Christ to Aristotle. It  
 “ is under his name only that I can be saved.  
 “ Wherefore, that all fearful solicitude and anxious  
 “ cares may be expelled from your breast, be  
 “ assured, Heloisa, that my conscience rests upon  
 “ that rock, on which Christ built his church.” —  
 He then specifies the articles of his belief, and  
 concludes: “ This is the faith in which I stand,  
 “ and here I fix the anchor of my hope : thus

BOOK

VII.

“strengthened, I do not fear the howlings of  
 “Scilla; I laugh at the gulph of Carybdis; and  
 “the fatal songs of the Sirens charm me not.  
 “If the tempest roar, I am not shaken, nor  
 “do the blowing winds move me. My feet rest  
 “upon this solid rock<sup>2</sup>.”

The messenger now returned with the agreeable tidings, that the pope was satisfied with the favorable accounts he had received of the dispositions of Abeillard, that he suspended the sentence which had been pronounced against him, and that, conformably to his request, he was permitted to end his days in the monastery of Cluni.

His life at  
 Cluni.

The calm stillness, which, at evening, often succeeds to a tempestuous day, may very aptly represent the present state of the mind of Abeillard. All was hushed within him, the moment Peter, taking him by the hand, signified to him the will of Rome. — Abeillard then begged the good man's blessing, and while on his knees, humbly requested, as he was now his subject, that he would lay his commands on him; that the only wish he had, was to retire from the world, to make his peace with heaven, and to be heard of no more. Peter raised him from the ground: “I have no commands, said he, to  
 “give you: you are free to indulge your own

<sup>2</sup> Op. Abeil. p. 308.



“pursuits; and as to the rule of Cluni, by which  
“our hours and conduct are regulated, it shall  
“be no farther binding on you, than as it may  
“suit with your inclinations. Be happy only, and  
“resigned to your station.” — Abeillard insisted,  
that he should be considered as a private religious  
man, and that no distinction or indulgence should  
be shown him. — To this the abbot would by no  
means consent, and he gave his orders that, after  
himself, he should occupy the first place in the  
monastery’.

Very few words will now describe the life of  
Abeillard. The uniformity of the cloistered  
situation admits of no variety, and the occupations  
of one day are the occupations of life. Resigned he  
was: he was humble, retired, taciturn, studious,  
and devout. The most perfect admired his greater  
perfection, and the indolent were animated by the  
view of his splendid virtues. Peter Maurice, who  
was an eye-witness to his conduct, has delineated,  
with much complacency, the behaviour of his  
friend and this I will give. It is contained in a letter  
to Heloisa.

“It was the superintending providence of  
“heaven which sent him to Cluni, in the last  
“years of his life. The present was the richest  
“which could have been made us. Words will  
“not easily express the high testimony, which

<sup>a</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep. ad Helois. p. 337.

BOOK  
VII.

“ Cluni bears to his humble and religious deport-  
 “ ment within these walls. Never did I behold  
 “ abjection so lowly, or abstemiousness so ex-  
 “ emplary. By my express desire, he held the  
 “ first place in our numerous community, but in  
 “ his dress he seemed the last of us all. When in  
 “ our public processions I saw him walking near  
 “ me, recollected and humble, my mind was  
 “ struck: so great a man, thought I, by self-  
 “ abasement, is thus voluntarily brought low!  
 “ Contrary to the practice of many, who call  
 “ themselves religious men, Abeillard seemed to  
 “ take delight in penury; and the most simple and  
 “ unadorned habit pleased him most. He looked  
 “ no further. In his diet, and in all that regarded  
 “ the care of his body, he was equally reserved  
 “ and abstemious. More than what was absolutely  
 “ necessary he never sought for himself, and he  
 “ condemned it in others. His reading was almost  
 “ incessant; he often prayed; and he never inter-  
 “ rupted his silence, unless when, urged by the  
 “ intreaties of the monks, he sometimes conversed  
 “ with them, or in public harangues explained to  
 “ them the great maxims of religion. When able,  
 “ he celebrated the sacred mysteries, offering to  
 “ God the sacrifice of the immortal lamb; and after  
 “ his reconciliation to the apostolic see, almost daily.  
 “ In a word his mind, his tongue, his hand, were  
 “ ever employed in the duties of religion, or in

developing

“ developing the truths of philosophy, or in the  
 “ profound researches of literature \*.

B O O K

VII.

This surely is the description of a perfect man, drawn by the hand of one of the most amiable and beneficent characters, recorded in the annals of monastic history. Peter had long been meditating a reform of the many abuses which, during the administration of Pontius, his predecessor, particularly, had crept into his order: he wished to restore it to its ancient splendor. But also, as every thing that is human seems to contain within itself the principles of its own destruction, Cluni, which had now subsisted more than two hundred years, was in its natural decline; and this was accelerated by its vast wealth and unbounded reputation. Its growth had been rapid and unusual, and it fell in a similar proportion. The great man in vain opposed this necessary effect, and with joy he availed himself of the example, the learning, and the influence of Abeillard. They could apply temporary relief to the evil; and Peter, a few years after, introduced a very serious system of reform. He died, and with him expired the glory of Cluni.

In the exercise of the virtues, I have recorded, Abeillard had spent some months, and perhaps they were the happiest of his life. The monks were

\* Pet. Cluniac. Ep. ad Helois. p. 337.

BOOK VII. very desirous that he would be more liberal of his instructions to them, and the abbot (who saw with pleasure that a taste for literature was reviving in his convent, which he could but ascribe to the example of Abeillard), was very pressing that he should comply with their wishes. Abeillard could refuse nothing to his kind benefactor; but he felt a secret reluctance, which no effort could surmount, in again entering on the business of instruction, which had often proved so disastrous to his happiness. The calm, which he now enjoyed, might only portend another storm. There was likewise another cause which aided to generate this distaste for public employment, of which at first he was hardly sensible. His constitution had always been delicate, and care, preying upon his tender fibres, had increased the evil. When he came to Cluni, as Peter observed in his letter to Rome, his health was very precarious, and it did not seem that he had many more years to number. The agitation subsiding, which had given motion to his heart, a languor ensued, and he began to suspect that a period would soon be put to all his labors. With composure he viewed the event, but it gave a disrelish for every active pursuit, by which his neighbour indeed might have been served, and his own mind would have been disturbed in that awful meditation, which prepares us best for another world.



He was willing, however, to get the better of his reluctance; to make some return for all the kindness he experienced, and to comply with the intreaties of his friends, which he could oppose no longer. He sometimes, therefore, appeared in the public school of the convent, and entered on such discussions as he thought would be most agreeable to his hearers. Their applause was as unbounded, as it was sincere, and, for a moment, it revived in him that animation of ideas and of eloquence, which was his peculiar excellence. These exertions did but injure his health; his color was seen to come and go, and a tremulous faltering in his voice soon indicated that the internal frame was giving way. Other symptoms likewise showed themselves, and a scorbutic humor, to which he had long been subject, broke out with violence on many parts of his body'. — The monks were alarmed; but no one so much as the good abbot, who now loved him as a friend, and who feared that Cluni would soon be deprived of so eminent a pattern of monastic virtues.

He redoubled his attention to him; he expostulated gently with him on the too little care he seemed to take of his health; he insisted that he should desist from every strong exertion; that he should give less time to study and reflection;

' Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

**BOOK** that he should conform to none of the duties  
**VII.** of the convent ; but that by gentle exercise , repose , and every assistance which medicine could supply , he would endeavour to regain strength , and ward off the blow which threatened him. Abeillard submitted ; but all attempts to relieve him proved successless ; his malady grew daily more inveterate , and it was judged proper to try the effect of another air.

And dies at  
 St. Marcellus.

At Chalons on the river Saone , not far from Cluni , stood the priory of St. Marcellus. It was beautifully situated at a little distance from the town , the neighbouring country was delightful ; and its air was thought to be the most pure in Burgundy. It is the description which Peter himself gives of it. The priory depended on the abbey of Cluni. When it seemed adviseable that Abeillard should try the effect of air , none was judged so proper as that of St. Marcellus ; and Peter , with his usual kindness , proposed it to him. Abeillard was not disposed to move ; sickness , conspiring with the recollection of former troubles , had served still more to inspire a distaste of life , and he did not wish to leave Cluni , which probably he should never see again , and where , amongst the sympathizing cares of his friends , he might close his eyes in peace. This unwillingness he expressed to the abbot , and he dwelt upon it with unusual earnestness. Peter , however , could not recede from

the point; for he judged that a life, which every day's experience rendered of more consequence to his convent, should be guarded by every possible attention. He, therefore, persisted in his design, and Abeillard, reluctantly obedient, taking leave of his friends, was conveyed to St. Marcellus. Often did he turn his eyes towards that noble mansion, where he had found protection in distress, and where, to his experience at least, religion, learning, virtue, and Peter the venerable dwelt.

“ Thus (continues the abbot of Cluni in his narration to Heloisa) this good and simple man, having spent some time with us, avoiding evil and fearing God; was, by my express desire, sent to Chalons. The scurvy, and other infirmities, had become daily more violent. I thought the situation might agree with him, for it is healthy, and more beautifully pleasant, than most parts of Burgundy: its site is near the town, but on the other side of the river, which washes with its stream the verdant banks of the priory.”

But it did not seem that this genial air of St. Marcellus, that its flowery lawns, and silver stream, could restore vigor to the expiring life of Abeillard. On the contrary he grew worse, and perhaps what was meant to relieve him, only accelerated his end. Sensible then that all human means could not avert the blow, he cheerfully submitted to it,

‘ Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

**B O O K** and prepared to meet his fate with the cool com-  
**VII.** posure of a christian philosopher. He resumed, as well as he was able, the course of life he had practised at Cluni: he studied, prayed, and meditated. Even he did more. The confraternity of St. Marcellus begged that they also might partake of his instructions, and he made an effort to satisfy their request. He wrote some discourses for them; and when his hand could obey no longer, he dictated what remained, in a feeble voice, to the monks who sat attentive round him<sup>7</sup>.

“ Occupied in these exercises, concludes Peter,  
 “ the visiter of the gospel found him, not asleep,  
 “ but watching. He found him truly watching,  
 “ and he called him, with the wise virgins, to  
 “ the banquet of eternal bliss. He had his lamp  
 “ full of oil, that is, a conscience replete with the  
 “ works of a holy life. — The virulence of his  
 “ disorder increasing, in a few days, he was brought  
 “ to that goal, towards which all the generations  
 “ of men are hastening. With what sentiments of  
 “ devotion he then first declared his faith, and  
 “ afterwards made the confession of his sins; with  
 “ what ardent affection he received the body of his  
 “ redeemer, which was to carry him to eternal  
 “ rest; and how earnestly he commended both  
 “ soul and body, here and for ever, into the

<sup>7</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep.



“ hands of his maker, many holy men can  
 “ witness, and with them the whole convent of  
 “ St. Marcellus \*.”

BOOK  
 VII.

Abeillard died in his sixty-third year, on the twenty-first of April, in the year 1142.

The reader who has seen the detached parts of Abeillard's character, may with ease collect the scattered members, and view at once the general portrait. — He was born with uncommon abilities, and in a better age, had they been directed to other purposes, their display might have given more solid glory to their possessor, and more real advantage to mankind. But he was to take the world as he found it, for he could not correct its vicious taste, nor indeed did he attempt it. On the contrary the vicious taste of the age seemed to accord with the most prominent features of his mind. He loved controversy, was pleased with the sound of his own voice, and, in his most favorite researches, rather looked for quibbles and evasive sophistry, than for truth and the conviction of reason. He was a disputatious logician therefore, and in this consisted all his philosophy. — His divinity was much of the same complexion.

When we consider him as a writer, not much more can be added to his praise. He is obscure, labored, and inelegant, nor do I discover any

\* Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

BOOK VII. traces of that genius and vivid energy of soul, which he certainly possessed, and which rendered him so formidable in the schools of philosophy. Even when he describes his own misfortunes, and is the hero of his own tale, the story is languid, and it labors on through a tedious and digressive narration of incidents. In his theological tracts he is more jejune, and in his letters, he has not the elegance, nor the harmony, nor the soul of Heloisa. Therefore, did we not know, how much his abilities were extolled by his contemporaries, what encomiums they gave to his pen, and how much the proudest disputants of the age feared the fire of his tongue, we certainly should be inclined to say, perusing his works, that Abeillard was not an uncommon man.

Nor was he uncommon in his moral character. He had not to thank nature for any great degree of sensibility, that source of pain and of pleasure, of virtue and of vice. Thrown, from early youth, into habits, which could not meliorate his dispositions, he became selfish, opiniative, and vain-glorious. What did not serve to gratify his own humor, called for little of his regard. He wished to appear above the common feelings of humanity, for his philosophy was not of a nature to make him the friend of man. Of religion he knew little more than the splendid theory; and its amiable precepts were too obvious and familiar to engage

the attention, and modify the heart, of an abstruse and speculative reasoner.— When he loved Heloisa, it was not her person, nor her charms, nor her abilities, nor her virtues, which he loved; he fought only his own gratification, and in its pursuit, no repulsion of innocence could thwart him, no voice of duty, of friendship, of unguarded confidence, could impede his headlong progress. He suffered; and from that moment rather he became a man. We may blame him perhaps, that he should so easily forget Heloisa; but I have said, that he never really loved her. More than other men, he was not free to command his affections; and from motives of religion, perhaps even of compassion, he wished in her breast to check that ardent flame, which burned to no other purpose, than to render her heart miserable, and her life forlorn.

To erase these unfavorable impressions, which the mind has conceived of Abeillard, we must view him in distress, smarting from oppression and unprovoked malevolence. There was, I know, in his character something which irritated opposition, whether it was a love of singularity, an asperity of manners, or a consciousness of superior talents, which he did not disguise. However this might be, the behaviour of his enemies was always harsh, and sometimes cruel; and him we pity. — He now became a religious, a benevolent,

BOOK  
VII.

and a virtuous man; and thousands reaped benefit from his instructions, as they were tutored by his example. — The close of his unhappy life was to the eye of the christian spectator its most brilliant period. His sun, which through its long revolution, had been often obscured by dark clouds and pallid vapors, now descended in a mild radiance, and disappeared with glory. In his death he was the great and good man, the philosopher and the christian. The all-ruling hand of providence, which made us what we are, can best correct the accidental depravity of our natures, and perfect his own work, sometimes in the sunshine of prosperity, but oftener in the chilling blast of tribulation.

Peter the venerable, whose benevolence of character, while it threw a veil over the imperfections of his friend, was careful to draw out his virtues, and to embellish them, has also described the abbot of St. Gildas. — “He was the Socrates of France, he says, the Plato of Italy, the Aristotle of the schools. To his predecessors, in the walks of philosophy, he was equal, or superior. Confessed by all the master and model of eloquence, he charmed by the variety of his talents, and convinced by the subtilty of his reasoning. But then was his life most transcendent, when clothed in the habit of Cluni, and professing its rule, he became the true philosopher of Christ.



“ Here happily terminating the last scene of a long  
 “ life, he left us full of hope, that his eternal habita-  
 “ tion would be with the virtuous and the wise’.

B O O K  
 VII.

There is more of panegyric, than of simple truth in these lines; but they fell without flattery from the pen of Peter, while he wished to sooth the aching heart of Heloisa.

The news of the death of Abeillard was carried to Cluni, and the whole convent lamented his loss. Peter mourned for him as for a friend, snatched immaturely away, just as he began to know his worth, and to admire his virtues. Vainly he had sometimes flattered himself, that heaven might indulge his wishes, and give him longer the company of a man, from whose conversation and advice he could draw comfort and counsel, in the arduous duties of his office, and from whom also the whole community of Cluni might derive such essential benefits. His death however was not an unexpected shock, and was therefore less painful: from the first moment he had entered his gates, he saw he was a flower, wounded at the root, which must soon wither and fall.

The abbot of  
 Cluni writes  
 an account of  
 his death to  
 Heloisa.

When his good heart had indulged these mournful thoughts, and a solemn service, agreeably to the practice of the Roman church, had been performed for the repose of the departed soul; Peter well saw he had another office of friendship to

<sup>9</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

BOOK execute, which could not be any longer postponed.

VII. This was to acquaint Heloisa of the event.<sup>1</sup> He knew the tender tie which bound her to Abeillard; at all events, as he had been the founder of the Paraclet, its benefactor, and its friend, it was proper they should have notice of his death. Often did he reflect, how he could communicate the doleful tidings best: he was not personally known to Heloisa; he would therefore, he thought; adopt that method, which, from his knowledge of human nature, would probably make the least painful impression. — Since Abeillard had been at Cluni, he had received letters from the abbess, probably to inquire after the health of his guest, and she had sent him some presents, as a mark of her esteem<sup>10</sup>.

He begins his letter by saying, how much her attention had pleased him, and that, on her own account alone, he had felt the most sentimental joy from her letters. “I wished, says he, instantly  
 “to have replied, for my heart was full; but  
 “business, and the troublesome cares of office,  
 “to which I am obliged to give way, hindered me.  
 “With some difficulty I now steal a day, and I  
 “give it to you.” — He is sensible, he observes, that  
 “he should have made some return for the warm  
 “regard she had expressed for him, and which her

<sup>10</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

presents also had attested; that he should have said how much he loved her in the Lord. BOOK  
VII.

The venerable man then proceeds with much gallantry: "But it is not just now, says he, that I begin to love you: I remember what my heart felt for you many years ago. When first I heard your name, and fame reported the progress you had made in human literature, I was but a young man. Then, I recollect, it was said, that a girl, though engaged in the world, was busied in the pursuits of science, and in the thorny paths of worldly philosophy. This was rare; but it was added that, neither pleasure nor amusements could draw her, by their allurements, from the objects of her laudable inquiry. And at a time, when almost the whole world, shamefully indolent, had ceased from these laudable pursuits, and wisdom could hardly find where to rest its foot, not only in the company of the softer sex, which had totally renounced her, but even amongst men, you, Heloisa, by your exalted studies left all the women far behind you, and but few men could enter into competition with you. But soon your pursuits were turned to a better object: the gospels took place of logic, Paul of philosophy, and Christ of Plato; to the academic grove succeeded the retired cloister. Now were you truly called the philosophic maid."

## BOOK

## VII.

He then continues his encomium in many allusions from the books of scripture, and exhorts her to perseverance for the advantage of many, who were now to draw edification from her example, and instruction from her lips. “With pleasure, says he, could I discuss these matters with you, and dwell on the subject, for I am charmed with your erudition, but still more am I charmed by the fame of your religious life.”—He tells her how much it is his wish, that she were an inhabitant of Marcigni, (a convent of nuns not far from Cluni), and he relates their admirable virtues. “These, I know, continues he, you and your sisters may possess, even in greater measure, and it may not be possible to add to them; but would not our republic, of which Marcigni is a member, be enriched by the treasures you would so liberally lavish on us? But it has not entered into the schemes of providence to bestow *this* blessing on Cluni.”

Hitherto he had not mentioned the name of Abeillard, or most distantly alluded to him; he had run out into compliment, and the artful induction of such matter, as would please by its elegance and familiar application, while it prepared her mind for the shock, which would not be so violent, when she saw that the hand which gave it was humane and gentle.—The last



line, " But it has not entered into the schemes  
" of providence to bestow *this* blessing on Cluni,"  
most happily introduces the painful subject.  
" You heaven will not give us, he says, but it  
" has given us your Abeillard, Heloisa, that ser-  
" vant of God, and that christian philosopher,  
" whose name shall ever be mentioned with re-  
" spect and honor."— He then relates his saint-  
like life at Cluni, in the words I have already  
copied, and in the conclusion of this charming  
panegyric, ( which was calculated to fill her mind  
with the enthusiasm of virtue, and to raise it, in  
warm gratitude, to him, who had dealt so kindly  
with Abeillard ), he tells her that his health had  
begun to decline, and that he had sent him to  
the mild air of St. Marcellus. Nor does he forget  
still to praise his exemplary deportment, till the  
last scene can be with-held no longer: but so  
gradually had she been prepared for it, that it  
breaks imperceptibly upon her, and she hardly  
feels its shock.

Having told the melancholy tale in a manner,  
which did honor to his heart and head, he  
concludes in these consoling words: " Thus did  
" Abeillard close his days. He, whose learning  
" was vast, and of whom almost the four corners  
" of the world had been taught to speak, became  
" the disciple of him, who was meek and humble  
" of heart. He is gone to his master. And you,

BOOK " dear sister, who were once his wife, but  
 VII. " whom afterwards a purer tie united to him,  
 " repose now in the certain hope that the day  
 " will come, when he will again be given to  
 " you. In the mean time, remember him,  
 " when your thoughts are raised to God; remem-  
 " ber also me, and my brethren at Cluni<sup>11</sup>."

We know not, after all, how Heloisa received the tidings; for no reliance can be placed on the accounts, which some authors, in wanton playfulness, have chosen to give of it<sup>12</sup>. That it affected her much, is certain; because it would revive a thousand sad ideas, which had long been associated in her mind: otherwise, the enthusiasm of her passion had spent itself; she was now near her fortieth year; absence had applied its soothing balsam; and religion, reason, and virtue, had all conspired to call her thoughts from earth to heaven. But if she felt the most pungent sorrow, it was but natural; and if she indulged it, it was surely pardonable. The whole society of the Paraclet may likewise be permitted to mingle their tears with her's.

She requests  
 his body, and  
 obtains it.

The reader will perhaps recollect that Abeillard, in his first letter to Heloisa, had requested that, when or wheresoever he should die, his body might be conveyed to the Paraclet, that so he

<sup>11</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep.

<sup>12</sup> Vie d'Abeil. p. 269.

might partake more securely of their prayers. BOOK  
VII.  
At the time, this request had greatly agitated Heloisa, and it seemed to press like the hand of death upon her heart: she thought it cruel and ungenerous: but she could never forget it, and as the event, which she feared so much, had now happened, it would be her first duty to discharge the obligation. There is likewise within us a natural propension to possess the last remains of our friends, though they be but lifeless ashes, or cold dust.

Abeillard, it is probable, had lost sight of a circumstance, which was once so near to his heart, or had neglected to mention it, as a dying petition, to Peter of Cluni, or to the monks who closed his eyes. But Heloisa did not therefore think herself released from her engagement: she could propose it to the abbot of Cluni, nor could she doubt of his compliance. It was, besides, the united prayer of the Paraclet, that the ashes of their founder should repose within their walls. She therefore wrote to Peter, thanking him for his letter, and all his kind attentions to Abeillard, and then urged, in warm terms, what had formerly been his request, which she strengthened with her own and the joint petition of all her sisters<sup>11</sup>. This letter is lost.

<sup>11</sup> Vie d'Abeil. p. 269.

## BOOK

## VII.

The good man felt at once the propriety of the request, and though he wished much to have retained the corse of Abeillard, whose dust would do honor to Cluni, for ages yet to come; yet he should not, he thought, be justified in so doing: he communicated the petition of the Paraclet to his community, who unanimously resolved that it must not be complied with; and the monks of St. Marcellus, who were actually in possession of the body, were even more averse. They had buried it in solemn pomp, and were preparing to raise a monument to his memory. The abbot in vain remonstrated, and urged the strong plea and the merit of Heloisa. In virtue of his post, he might have commanded a compliance; but this, from what motives, I know not, he did not chuse to do. He rather preferred another method, which was singular and romantic.

Some months had passed, during which nothing more was said about the removal of the body, and it seemed as if the scheme were deserted. Probably he had not neglected to inform Heloisa of his fixed resolution to oblige her, and had made such arrangements, as might be most proper for its accomplishment. In due time he went over to the priory of St. Marcellus. It was in the month of November. They could not suspect his intentions, as he was their superior, and various business might be the motive of his



coming. In a dark night, however, while the community was asleep, the body, by the aid of his friends, who abetted the design, was taken from the vault; a carriage was ready to receive it; and they conveyed it, with all expedition, to the abbey of the Paraclet. Peter himself attended, and escorted the convoy<sup>14</sup>.

The shock was great which Heloisa felt; but she had not time to indulge it. The abbot of Cluni was announced, and instantly he appeared. She had not been apprized of his coming, and he well imagined that his sudden entrance might break the painful impression, which the mournful tidings, and more than that, the presence of the poor remains of Abeillard, would make on her mind. Indeed, gratitude she expressed for his kind services, and happy she was to see a man, for whom she entertained the most exalted esteem. But grief, and a bursting heart overpowered every other sentiment, and she withdrew.

In the mean time, preparations were making for the solemn celebration of the obsequies, and the body was carried into the church, covered with black, and surrounded by burning tapers. It was placed before the altar. Peter of Cluni, though fatigued from his journey, would perform as principal minister. The nuns assembled in their

<sup>14</sup> Heloif. Ep. ad Pet. Cluniac. p. 343.

BOOK  
VII.

choir, with Heloisa at their head; the sign was given, and the service opened in slow and plaintive music. — He that has imagination may now picture to himself Heloisa, in the finest attitude of resigned grief, with her eyes sometimes raised towards heaven, but often turned towards Abeillard, and glued to the mournful object. — He will represent the holy sisterhood variously affected, but with their countenances rather full of hope, that if they have lost the founder of the Paraclet, they have him for an intercessor in heaven, who now even kindly looks down upon them, and hears their prayers — and the venerable priest he will behold, standing at the altar, by his firm looks giving strength to the dejected, and animating the luke-warm by a display of the most sincere and unaffected piety.

When the service was over, Peter made a discourse to the assembly: he spoke of the virtues of Abeillard, and of his death which was saint-like, he recommended an imitation of those virtues; and he prayed that his end might be like unto his. He acknowledged and magnified the loss which Cluni and the Paraclet had suffered; but then he inculcated submission to heaven. He glanced at the extraordinary endowments, the virtue, and the piety of Heloisa, from which every advantage might be derived, though the

father of the Paraclet was no more: and he concluded with an earnest prayer for the prosperity and happiness of all those, who now attended this mournful ceremony <sup>15</sup>. BOOK  
VII.

We are come to the last act of the tragic scene.—The corse was now raised from the bier, and carried to the vault, which stood open to receive it. The mourners attended in procession, and the doleful psalmody still continued. Peter, having wiped a tear from his eyes, distinctly pronounced the parting supplication, and threw dust upon the grave: the spectators took their last look; when the vault was closed, and all was silence.

The stay which the abbot made at the Paraclet, as he acquaints us, was very short <sup>16</sup>. Business recalled him, and it was necessary he should return to pacify his brethren. Nor was it a moment to enjoy the company of Heloisa, whose mind was too sorrowful to engage in conversation. She hung over Abeillard's grave, and was not easily drawn from the spot. What friendly advice and sympathizing kindness could offer, she received from him, and he settled some other business which she proposed to him. Again he exhorted the nuns to obedience, and to the steady observance of their rule; and parting from them, took his way towards Cluni.

<sup>15</sup> Helois. Ep. ad Peter. Cluniac. p. 343.

<sup>16</sup> Pet. Cluniac. Ep. p. 344.

## BOOK

## VII.

Not long after this event, Heloisa wrote again to the abbot of Cluni. Her mind was more at ease; she might be fearful that her late behaviour had not pleased him; and she had some other requests to make. The letter is as follows.

She writes to  
Peter the  
venerable.

“ It was the kindness of heaven, most venerable  
“ father, which lately directed you to the Paraclet.  
“ We rejoiced, and we had reason to glory in  
“ your visit. Others may recount the benefits  
“ they have derived from your presence; but I  
“ am at a loss to express, nor can my mind well  
“ tell, how useful, and how pleasing, it was to  
“ me. You were with us in the month of Novem-  
“ ber last, when in our church you celebrated  
“ the sacred mysteries, and the Paraclet you  
“ recommended to the charge of the Holy Spirit.  
“ The discourse you delivered to us is warm on  
“ our memories; and never can we forget the  
“ treasure you intrusted to us, of the body of  
“ our dear master.—To me, in particular, whom  
“ you honor with the appellation of sister, as a  
“ pledge of your love and sincerity, was a singu-  
“ lar favor then also granted: when it shall  
“ please heaven to call me hence, thirty masses,  
“ you promised me, should be said at Cluni, for the  
“ repose of my soul; and you said, you would con-  
“ firm that promise to me by a writing under your  
“ own seal. I now request you to fulfil that engage-  
“ ment.—Send me also, if you please, another written  
“ deed, containing the absolution of Abeillard,



“ in distinct and fair characters, signed by your- B O O K  
 “ self, which may be hung upon his tomb.— VII.  
 “ And for the love of God and me, do remem-  
 “ ber my son Astrolabius: if you can, try to  
 “ procure a living for him from the bishop of  
 “ Paris, or from some other prelate. Farewel.  
 “ May heaven watch over you, and on some  
 “ future day, again permit us to see you at the  
 “ Paraclet!”

This is the last letter of Heloisa which time has not destroyed. It contains sentiments, expressive of the gratitude she felt for the good abbot's kindness to her, and of the high opinion she entertained of him. It contains likewise some other matters which are not uninteresting; such as the thirty masses at Cluni, which Heloisa, enlightened and philosophical as she was, seemed to consider as a most singular favor; such as the *absolution* she requested for Abeillard. This was a devotional practice of the times. Abeillard had been accused of holding heterodox opinions, and had even been condemned, and when he died, his faith was still suspected by many; Heloisa therefore was desirous to procure a formal attestation from the abbot of Cluni, importing that he had expired in the faith of the church, and in the favor of its ministers. This was called an *absolution*, and it was usually fixed over the graves of the dead, that it might be

**B O O K** read by the faithful".—Astrolabius is likewise  
**VII.** mentioned in this letter. It is the second time  
 only that his name occurs, and it never returns  
 again, excepting in the abbot's reply. He was at  
 this time more than twenty years old.

The abbot of  
 Cluni's an-  
 swer.

The abbot's reply.— " I was pleased, dearest  
 " sister, and not a little, by the perusal of your  
 " letter. From it I perceived, that my stay at  
 " the Paraclet was not really so transitory, for  
 " the recollection of it seems tenaciously fixed  
 " upon your mind. It was not like the flying  
 " visit of a traveller, who is hospitably entertained  
 " for one night, and is thought of no more.  
 " How kind and indulgent you were to me!  
 " Nothing seems to have been lost of all I did,  
 " or said, not only when my discourses were  
 " delivered intentionally for your instruction, but  
 " even when I conversed with you on common  
 " and familiar subjects. It is the regard you  
 " have for me which has given so retentive a  
 " power to your memory. Or perhaps you  
 " were influenced by the words, written in the  
 " rules of our respective orders, that in the per-  
 " sons of our guests we are to think we receive  
 " Christ himself. I trust then, that I shall never  
 " be forgotten at the Paraclet; and that, to the  
 " father of mercies, you and your sisters, will  
 " ever raise up your hands for me. The return

" Flury, vol. xii.

" I can make to you, that I daily do. Long  
" before I knew you, you possessed a place in  
" my heart; and since I have known you, that  
" place has been enlarged by all the influence of  
" the most sincere affection.—The promise I  
" made of the masses, I now execute, and send  
" you.—And with it you receive, what you  
" requested, the absolution of Abeillard, written  
" and signed by me.—As to Astrolabius, whom  
" I adopt, because he is your son, be assured,  
" as soon as it shall be in my power, I will do  
" all I can to place him in some of the great  
" churches. But the thing is difficult; for I have  
" often experienced that our bishops, when  
" application is made to them, make many dif-  
" ficulties, which are not easily removed. For  
" your sake, however, my best endeavours shall  
" be exerted, and that as soon as may be. Fare  
" ye well."

Abeillard's absolution.—" I Peter, abbot of Cluni,  
" who received Peter Abeillard into the number  
" of my religious, and who, having taken his  
" body, by stealth, from the grave, delivered it  
" to Heloisa the abbess and to her nuns at the  
" Paraclet, do now, by the authority of God  
" and his saints, absolve him, in virtue of my  
" office, from all his sins. May he rest in peace".

These matters being thus settled, Heloisa,

BOOK  
VII.

penfive, but resigned, recalled all her thoughts, and fixed them at the Paraclet. Indeed, there was no external object to engage them, for all that remained of Abeillard was there. For one-and-twenty years, which she had still to live, we hear no more of her, only that she was held in the highest estimation, that she was a pattern of every monastic and christian virtue, and that, ever retaining the tenderest affection of a wife, she prayed unceasingly at her husband's tomb<sup>11</sup>. Surely there is something, at least, humane in the doctrine, which teaches us to hold an intercourse with the other world, and to believe that friendship may be serviceable even beyond the grave!

I have before observed, that so uniform and unchequered is the monastic life, that the most minute account, or the accurate memoirs, of a nun's life, could not give us the smallest entertainment. And the misfortune is, that then there is the least to be said, when the pious recluse conforms best to her holy institute, and is the more perfect woman. It will be a question with some, whether a nun, in any circumstances, merits the appellation of a perfect woman! Perfection, I believe, may be attained in all states; though that being, indubitably, is the most perfect, which answers best to the designs of its creation. Why, or for what end, we were made, is a point not so easily perhaps to be decided.

<sup>11</sup> Notæ Quercet. p. 1195.



Am I not free to chuse my own state of life; to withdraw, if I please, from the society of mortals; and to live only to myself and to my maker? If I owe any thing to society, that duty shall first be cancelled, and my release will be signed. The life of a recluse may be termed selfish, and so it is. But on what principle does heact, who engages in all the pleasures and the pursuits of life? So little real virtue is there, even among those who talk most of philanthropy and of social kindness, that a few, I think, may be allowed to secede from the great mass, and look for happiness in the practice of such duties as please them best, and where they fancy it may be found. If Europe stands in need of greater population, it may be effected by the suppression of vice, and not by exposing more to its baneful infection. I would open indeed the doors of convents, because an improper use is often made of their locks and bars; but I would compel none to go out, who preferred the holy retirement of a cloister, to the wide expanse of heaven, and to the anxious and corroding cares of active life.—From these Heloisa was now free; for as her heart separated from the world, her happiness increased. That had been the source of all her misery. To the exercises of prayer, meditation, study, and of many other innocent and amusing duties, we will now leave her, and turn to some events of importance, which occupy the period of twenty years, on which I am entered.

B O O K

VII.

Innocent II.

Innocent the second was just dead, having filled the chair of St. Peter thirteen years. He was a man of worth and abilities, but little occurs in the annals of his reign, momentous or interesting. Peter of Leon was chosen, by a powerful faction, to oppose him, and he supported himself for some time, even in Rome itself, against all the weight of Innocent. It was only death that closed this formidable opposition, which lasted for eight years. Peter had taken the name of Anacletus. His principal friend was Roger duke of Sicily; while the rest of the christian princes espoused the cause of Innocent, who seems to have been canonically elected. — It is curious to behold the two pontiffs, mutually fulminating their anathemas against each other, as ill humor or a show of success gave energy to their operations: but the consequences of these schisms in the christian church were fatal: they relaxed its discipline, and spread the evils of anarchy and civil strife.

It was only since its aggrandizement, which had now risen to an enormous bulk, that the papal throne had become an object of cabal and ambition. In the first ages of the church we read of no anti-popes; for who would run after a post of labor, of humility, of mortification, and of suffering? It was the duty of the first pastor to set the example of these virtues. But when Rome, from her seven hills, declared herself the mistress

of the world, in a sense more extensive even than she had known in the days of her greatest martial splendor, where was the man of ambition whose eye would not be raised to the gorgeous throne?

To Innocent succeeded Celestin and Lucius, Eugenius III. both the second of the name, whose joint reigns did not exceed many months; when we come to Eugenius the third, of whom I have already spoken. He had been a monk of Clairvaux, and a disciple of Bernard. When the saint heard of his promotion, he thus wrote to the cardinals:

“ God forgive you! What have you done? You  
 “ have taken a dead man from his grave, and  
 “ replunged him into a crowd and the tumults  
 “ of life. Where could your thoughts be, when  
 “ you chose this rustic man; when you tore the  
 “ axe and spade from his hand, dragged him to  
 “ the palace, raised him on a throne, and clothed  
 “ him in purple? To me the change is ridiculous.  
 “ A little man, covered with rags, in a moment  
 “ is exalted to a post, from whence he may rule  
 “ over princes and bishops, may dispose of king-  
 “ doms and empires! There may be something  
 “ miraculous, I own, in this event; still, I am  
 “ not without my apprehensions that, modest as  
 “ he is and habituated to retirement, he will be  
 “ little adapted to acquit himself of his high  
 “ functions with a becoming dignity<sup>20</sup>. ”

<sup>20</sup> Bern. Ep. 237.

## BOOK

## VII.

He wrote another letter to the pope himself:  
 “ You are now, says he to him, in possession of  
 “ a higher place; but is it more safe? Has not  
 “ danger increased with your exaltation? — How  
 “ happy should I die, could I see the church of  
 “ God as it was in former ages, when the apostles  
 “ let go their nets to take souls, and not to draw  
 “ in gold and silver. — In all you do, remember  
 “ you are mortal. Let the recollection of the  
 “ deaths of your predecessors, some of whom  
 “ your own eyes saw expire, ever keep the  
 “ awful thought in your mind. The short period  
 “ of their glory should tell you, how soon you  
 “ may be called to follow them.”

At his accession Rome was much agitated by the preaching of Arnold of Brescia and the designs of his followers: Eugenius therefore retired, and seeing no prospect of the restoration of peace, continued his journey into France. — The popes, at this time, were often obliged to retire from Rome. It was not at once that the people could be induced quietly to submit to their unnatural jurisdiction; and besides, a very powerful faction, which the anti-popes occasionally headed, gave life to an opposition, which was easily irritated, which great condescensions could not permanently satisfy, and which, at the election of every new

<sup>21</sup> Bern. Ep. 23.



master, was ready to petition for redress of grievances, to mutiny, and to rebel. By steady and cool exertions they might have carried their point, and have torn from the Roman pontiff those insignia of wordly grandeur, which belonged not to him; and in such an undertaking, the princes of Europe, it seems, had they known their real interest, would have espoused the cause of the Roman people: but these very princes, and this very people, when the paroxysm of good sense was over, were themselves the greatest support of the unchristian power. It was from passion rather and testiness of humor, and not from conviction of its inexpediency, that they opposed its progress: they were ignorant of their own rights, and uninformed of the real principles of christianity, and so basely superstitious, that the mere threat of excommunication disarmed their justest fury, and reduced them to obedience and the most submissive penitence.

When Eugenius was obliged to fly from Italy he retired to France. Here he might rely on finding a secure asylum. It is remarkable that this kingdom, which has always been tenacious of its ecclesiastical privileges, and which gave less to Rome than any other christian state, should, on every occasion, have stood foremost to protect the persons of the pontiffs, and even then receive them with respect, obey their instruction, court

BOOK  
VII.

their good will, and support, at their own expense, the splendor of their courts, when they condemned the very principles of their conduct, and could but applaud the opposition of their enemies. The enlarged and enlightened minds of the French nation could ever distinguish betwixt abuse and principle, and could even then respect the person of their first bishop, when they pitied his behaviour, and viewed the errors, into which the false maxims of his court had impelled him.

Eugenius was the mover of the second crusade, and lived to see its issue. He was a prince of great private virtues, and the protector of the learned and the good. Peter the venerable has drawn his character: he knew him well, and was too honest to flatter, or to give unmerited praise. He had been with him in Rome. "I never knew," says he, a more constant friend, a brother more sincere, or a more indulgent father. His ear was patient to listen, and his tongue prompt to answer; and not as a master to his inferior, but as an equal to his equal, and sometimes as an inferior to his lord. There was no pomp, nothing arbitrary; no majesty in his deportment; justice, humility, and truth had possessed the whole man. Every petition I made was either granted, or he refused it upon terms so reasonable, that I could not complain." He

" Pet. Cluniac. Ep. ad Bern.

fat eight years, and died regretted. Anastasius the fourth, an old and experienced man, succeeded to him, who only saw the end of his first year.

We are come to Adrian the fourth. This was Nicolas Breakspear, born in England, of low and indigent parents. His father, to provide at least for his own wants, became a monk at St. Albans, and left Nicolas and his mother to contend with distress and penury. The youth was born with abilities, was sprightly, and ingenious, but indigence was a bar to all his wishes, and he could not even procure the common aid of a master in the grammar-school. When hunger pressed, he went to the door of his father's convent, and begged for bread. The proud monk was offended, he blushed that his family should be thus disgraced, and reproaching him one day with his indolence and want of spirit, turned him from the door, with an injunction that he would never return more.

Nicolas saw, at once, the horror of his situation, and that he had no friend but his own heart to look to. But if fate had marked him for a beggar, it would be more honorable, he thought, to practise his profession, at a distance from his own country. Forlorn and friendless he wandered about for some time, when an occasion presenting itself, he crossed over into France, and landed, with all the world before him, and

BOOK VII. providence his guide. But the horizon lowered round him. What could he do in this foreign land, unprotected and ignorant of the language? He did what he could; he labored when he could find employment, and when necessity compelled him, he begged. Thus unsuccessful he travelled on till he arrived at St. Rufus, a convent of regular canons, not far from Avignon in Provence.

Nicolas, as his historian relates, had a good figure, and his countenance was remarkably engaging. He presented himself to the abbot of St. Rufus, asked for employment. He was admitted, as a menial servant, into the convent. Fortune, he thought, for the first time, now smiled upon him, and he was resolved to co-operate: he labored hard, and strove, by the most active services, to render himself agreeable to his employers. His endeavours were successful; and very soon they observed that Nicolas had abilities which might be better employed. They admired his prudence, his judgment, and his cautious reserve. Very soon, therefore, the abbot offered him the habit of his order, expressing great approbation of his conduct, and a wish that he would enrol himself among the monks of St. Rufus. With exultation he accepted the proffered dignity, which seemed more than ample enough to fill the wildest schemes, his fancy ever formed. His life was a new process; he studied, he con-



versed with the learned, and he reflected much. By application his abilities expanded, and he rapidly advanced in science. His genius was penetrating, and he possessed a fluency of speech which was uncommon, and which culture soon rendered eloquent and persuasive. His love of retirement and of discipline was also exemplary. Thus he lived, the honor and admiration of his convent, for many years, when the abbot dying, Nicolas Breakspear was unanimously chosen his successor.

It was not long, however, before they repented of the choice they had made. The new abbot was a rigid man, and he exacted a regularity from his monks, which did not please them. They carried their complaints to Rome, and urged many groundless charges against him. Eugenius who was then pope, cited the parties before him. He admired the wisdom, the modesty, and the prudence of the abbot, and well saw from what source their complaints originated. He attempted to reconcile them, and seemed to have succeeded: but the evil was too inveterate, and soon they repeated their accusations with more violence than before. "I see, said Eugenius to the  
" malecontents, from whence your dissatisfaction  
" comes: go, and chuse another abbot, who may  
" please you better: Nicolas shall remain with  
" me." He staid; and the pope finding him very

BOOK

VII.

BOOK

VII.

intelligent and expert in business, employed him in his court, and soon after created him cardinal bishop of Albano. He was afterwards sent legate into Norway, on the very arduous business of instructing that barbarous nation, and so well did he execute his commission, and give general satisfaction in all that he did, that, on the death of Anastasius, in 1154, he was the next day elected pontiff, under the name of Adrian the fourth.

The tiara had no sooner touched the brows of Adrian, than he felt that swell of heart, which heroes and sceptered kings are said to feel.—The faction of Arnold was then powerful; they were guilty of excesses, and had publicly insulted a cardinal of Rome. The pontiff laid the city under an interdict, and refused to take it off, till the factious demagogue and his adherents should be expelled from the walls. For five months the service of the church was suspended, when the senators, compelled by the entreaties of the people, waited on the pope, begged his forgiveness, and promised to comply with his commands. Adrian was satisfied. Surrounded by his bishops and cardinals, and the nobility of Rome, he then showed himself to the people: they received him with bursts of the sincerest acclamations: the interdict was withdrawn: and peace and unanimity seemed once more restored to the distracted city.

Frederic Barbarossa, king of the Romans, came to Rome to receive the imperial crown. He was

admitted to an interview with Adrian; but neglecting to take hold of his holiness's stirrup, as the ceremonial seemed to require, the pontiff refused to admit him to the kiss of peace. A long conference took place, but Adrian was inflexible: the king then advised with his nobles, when the most ancient of them assured him, that what the pope required had been practised by his predecessors. Frederic was obliged to submit; and the next day, in the sight of his army, he held the stirrup, and sullenly walked by his side, while Adrian advanced about a hundred yards: the pontiff then embraced him, and presented him with the crown, in the church of St. Peter.

BOOK  
VII.

Adrian, however, and Frederic, were not of a character to be friends. The former entertained all the romantic ideas of prerogative, which had once filled the breast of Gregory the seventh; and the latter knew too well his own consequence, was too proud, too opinionated, and too informed, to submit to such extravagant pretensions. They quarrelled therefore, were reconciled, and again quarrelled, Adrian rather showing submission, than boldly meeting his adversary, till death opportunely intervened, and divided the combatants.

Adrian also contended with William the bad, second king of Sicily. The king had applied to him for the confirmation of his dominions, which he held of the holy see. This the pope refused; on

BOOK  
VII.

which William entered the lands of his holiness, and laid them waste with fire and sword. Adrian excommunicated the sacrilegious plunderer, and declared his subjects free from their allegiance. The Sicilians immediately sent a deputation to the pontiff, requesting he would accept their submission, and receive their fealty. Adrian put himself at the head of a formidable army, and advanced into the enemy's country: on all sides they submitted, and owned him their master. William, now sensible no time was to be lost, proposed terms of peace, which were accepted: a treaty was soon after concluded on conditions advantageous to the court of Rome.

He granted to Henry Plantagenet permission to conquer Ireland, and to establish in it the purity of the christian faith. The king had sent a messenger to compliment Adrian on his accession to the triple crown, and formally to present the petition, in question. "No one doubts it, says he in his bull to Henry, and you yourself know, that Ireland, and all the islands, which have embraced the christian faith, belong to the Roman see." — I know not the grounds of this extraordinary pretension, which extended equally to England, though Henry, in this instance, would hardly have admitted the claim. It is the poor boy, who begged bread at St. Albans, that now holds this language to Henry the second of



England!— With the bull Adrian sent a ring, ornamented with a rich emerald, which signified that he invested Henry with his kingdom of Ireland.

BOOK  
VII.

It was John of Salisbury, formerly a scholar of Peter Abeillard, and now chaplain to the archbishop of Canterbury, who was employed on this embassy. Being at Beneventum with Adrian, who loved him as his countryman, and who admired his abilities and his honest virtues, when the discourse, one day, ran on subjects which were mutually interesting, and the pope was unfolding the secrets of his heart: “My friend, said Adrian, it may seem that, in what I told you of my early life, I had much to suffer. Suffer I did; but when I compare it with the miseries which now surround me, I should rather say that, I was then at ease and happy. Well, I think, would it have been for me, had I never quitted my native home, or had I remained a humble monk, buried within the walls of St. Rufus. Still, I was not free to oppose the voice of heaven. I have lead a weary life betwixt the hammer and the anvil; and now I trust, the Lord will put his hand under the burden which he has laid upon my shoulders; for, indeed, it overpowers me.”

On another occasion he asked his friend, what the world said of him and the Roman court? John frankly answered: “They say that, Rome shows

## BOOK

## VII.

“ herself not so much the parent, as the stepmother  
 “ of the christian world. It abounds with scribes  
 “ and pharisees, who will not support with a single  
 “ finger the load which they heap on others. They  
 “ domineer insolently over the clergy, and give  
 “ no example to the faithful. They amass wealth,  
 “ and load their houses with ornaments of gold  
 “ and silver, into which never are the poor ad-  
 “ mitted, unless when vanity may be indulged.  
 “ Every thing is said to be venal, even justice  
 “ itself. — From this censure a few, I am told,  
 “ who do their duty, are exempt. But it is the  
 “ Roman bishop who is the great and insupportable  
 “ burden. The complaint is, that he builds pala-  
 “ ces, while the churches are falling, and that,  
 “ while the altars are neglected, he is seen pom-  
 “ pously clothed in gold and purple.” — “And  
 “ what is your own opinion of me?” said  
 Adrian, not offended by his honest freedom. —  
 “ Your question, replied John, disconcerts me  
 “ not a little. I must pass for a sycophant, if I  
 “ dissent from the public voice; and, if I join  
 “ it, I shall sin, perhaps, against that respect  
 “ which is due to your holiness.” — The pope  
 insisted that he should declare his sentiments. —  
 “ If I must speak then, continued he; it is my  
 “ opinion that, we should obey your instructions,  
 “ though in all things we should not imitate your  
 “ example. The world applauds and flatters you;

“ they call you father and lord. If you be our  
 “ father, why exact gifts from your children ?  
 “ And if our lord: how comes it that even this  
 “ Roman populace does not fear you ? Holy  
 “ father, you are not in the right path. What  
 “ has been gratuitously given to you, that do  
 “ you give with the same liberal hand.” — Adrian  
 smiled, and praising the ingenuous candor of  
 the ambassador, begged that if he heard any more  
 evil said of him, he would not fail to let him  
 know it. “But as to the contributions, said he,  
 “ which we receive from Christendom, you have  
 “ read the fable of the stomach and the mem-  
 “ bers: how unjust was their complaint; and how  
 “ deservedly did they languish, when the heart  
 “ no longer supplied its vivifying influence,  
 “ We are the stomach, you the complaining  
 “ members.” — John now smiled in his turn;  
 shook his head, and departed.

This same John of Salisbury was afterwards the  
 great friend and constant companion of Thomas  
 Becket, whose life he wrote, and who, soon after  
 the death of his master, for his eminent qualities,  
 was chosen bishop of Chartres.

Thus, in the midst of an agitated ocean, of  
 which he himself was the principal mover, com-  
 fortless and dissatisfied, lived Adrian the fourth;  
 he saw the end of four years and nine months,  
 when he died, in 1159, esteemed by the Roman

**BOOK** court, whose patrimony he had increased by some  
**VII.** considerable acquisitions, and praised for his disinterestedness, which he carried to a pitch of affected insensibility; for he permitted his mother, who saw him raised to the popedom, and who survived her son, barely to subsist on the alms she collected in the church of Canterbury <sup>21</sup>.

Alexander the third succeeded to the chair of St. Peter, which he filled for two-and-twenty years; but it is foreign from my purpose to enter on the transactions of this turbulent and interesting period.

State of  
England.

While Rome and the church was governed by the masters I have described, the political hemisphere of Europe continued to be agitated by war and internal dissensions. In England it was a period remarkably melancholy. Stephen had usurped the throne, and though possessed of virtues, which, in other circumstances, might have rendered his reign glorious and his subjects happy, yet was he necessitated to enter into engagements with his clergy and nobility, from which many fatal evils ensued. He supported himself, however, though he found neither happiness nor tranquillity; while the country was involved in a series of intestine disorders, to the last degree ruinous and destructive. — In the mean time, young Henry, the rightful heir to the crown, led on by his good genius, was tutored in the school of adversity,

<sup>21</sup> Fleury, vol. xv. Nat. Alex. sæc. xii. from original authors.



where he learned the practice of those great and splendid virtues, which would soon raise him to the throne of England, and make him the greatest monarch in the christian world. — Stephen died in 1154.

BOOK  
VII.

Lewis the seventh, surnamed the younger, because he reigned some years with his father, had been king since the year 1137. He was early embroiled with the court of Rome, though he was esteemed religious, and even, on some occasions, rather inclined to superstition. But the princes of his realm were particularly turbulent, and among these no one so much as Theobald, count of Champagne, brother to Stephen of England, who had protected Abeillard, and whom the monks extolled as the pattern of all princely virtues. In his character, however, he was mutinous and headstrong, and ever at war with his sovereign. This crime he expiated by charitable donations to the church, and by endowing monasteries: or if his sins were not thus forgiven him, at least he gained friends, whose interest was often most highly serviceable and among these Bernard of Clairvaux stood foremost.

State of  
France.

The disturbance and unsettled state of England were to France a fortunate event. The factious and evil spirit which often passed out of that country into Normandy, and from thence carried discord and the seeds of war into the neighbouring

BOOK provinces, was too much engaged at home.—

VII. Lewis had favored the cause of the usurper, and he had motives for it; at all events, it was his interest to keep alive the animosity of both parties, and to draw tranquillity from their dissensions. — The situation of France, upon the whole, had seldom been so calm. Religious disturbances there were, part of which I have related, and Rome, by her imprudent interference, scattered occasional discord. But Suger of St. Denys, who has been called the father of his country, was at the head of public affairs: and France could boast of many other great and good men, both in church and state.—It was likewise judged a fortunate circumstance, which, as it strengthened the royal domain, so did it seem to promise a more permanent security, that their king should have married Eleanor, the heiress of Guienne, by which so great an accession was made to their territories. Human foresight, however, which can sometimes read success in a visible combination of events, cannot so control their progress, as to keep at a distance some untoward circumstances, which often obtrude themselves unforeseen, and at once break to pieces the wisest schemes of sublunary policy. Such was this boasted marriage. — But I am detaining my reader on this minute detail, while a larger and more interesting object calls for all his attention.

By the success, which attended the first crusade, and by the victories, which the christian princes, established in the east, afterwards gained, four considerable states had been formed in the heart of Asia. These were Edeffa, Tripoli, Antioch, and Jerusalem. They had subsisted for more than forty years, and their territory and power were greatly extended. Unanimity would have rendered them invincible, and by occasional succours from Europe, the strength of the infidel nations might have been broken, and perhaps gradually annihilated. But discord soon divided their councils, and weakened their arms. Baldwin, the third, a youth of thirteen years, reigned in Jerusalem, under the regency of his mother; Josselin de Courtenay was count of Edeffa; Raymond de Poitiers, uncle to Eleanor of France, was prince of Antioch; and the great grandson of Raymond of Toulouse, commanded in Tripoli. These princes were all of the French nation.—Noradin, sultan of Aleppo, a powerful and active prince, watched with a curious eye every motion of the christian enemy, and seeing their dissensions, he availed himself of the fortunate moment: he laid siege to Edeffa, and carried it. The town was pillaged, the inhabitants massacred, and the churches polluted.

The situation of the other states was now alarming. The confederacy, which united them was

## BOOK

## VII.

broken: the enemy had penetrated into their territories, and seemed to meditate new conquests: an infant king sat on the throne of Jerusalem: and it was rumored that the proud conqueror was preparing to carry war against the walls of Antioch.—In these circumstances, of general consternation, it was resolved to apply to Europe for immediate assistance, and ambassadors were dispatched with the weighty commission. This was in the year 1145.

They waited on the pope, who was Eugenius III. He was moved by the melancholy tale, and as the French nation would probably be most interested in the fate of their countrymen in Asia, he wrote a letter to their king, wherein he strongly exhorts him and his people to engage in the holy warfare, and he promises them all the spiritual gifts, and extraordinary privileges, which his predecessor Urban had imparted to the first crusaders.

The messenger found Lewis in the happiest dispositions. Already his mind had entertained the romantic idea; for he had some sins of a grievous nature to expiate, contracted by the cruel massacre of the inhabitants of Vitri in Champagne, and he had a vow to fulfil, which his elder brother, Philip, had made, and had not lived to accomplish. — The letter of Eugenius at once fixed his resolution, and he



ordered a great assembly of the nobles and bishops of his realm to meet at Vezelai in Burgundy.

B O O K  
VII.

The feast of Easter came, which was the time appointed, and the concourse at Vezelai was numerous and splendid. Bernard of Clairvaux, the oracle of France, had been commanded by his holiness to preach the crusade, and the king had before consulted him as the guide of his conscience, and the soul that was to animate the great undertaking.—There was no church large enough to contain the multitude which thickened every moment: it was therefore proposed that they should move into a neighbouring plain. A scaffold was erected, and Bernard mounted. The king was on one side, and Eleanor, his queen, a little behind on the other. Before him stood a crowd, thick as the fallen leaves in autumn, which stretched over the plain, and seemed to meet the horizon. Bernard turned his face towards the East: a glow of enthusiasm beamed on his countenance; and he raised his eyes and hands towards heaven.—He first read the pope's letter: it held out the pardon of sins to the crusaders, and the protection of the holy see to themselves, to their wives, to their children, and to their property; and it promised the crown of martyrdom to those who should fall by the enemies sword.—This finished, he harangued the multitude: he talked of the dignity of the holy land, and of the profanation, to which soon perhaps it might again be exposed; he recounted the glorious achievements

B O O K  
VII.

of their ancestors, whose hardihood had wrested the promised inheritance from the hands of infidels, where many holy penitents had since shed their tears unmolested, and washed out their sins: this, said he, the enemy sees, and is mad with fury. "But what an occasion, continued he, is now offered for the pardon of your sins! Truly, it is an invention worthy of the depth of the divine goodness! None are excluded. Murderers, thieves, adulterers, all are called. — Turn then your swords no more against one another: the common enemy presents his breast to you. Confess your sins; take up the cross; and march against him. Victory or the palm of martyrdom awaits you in yonder regions:" and he pointed to the East.

His words, though uttered with the emphasis of an inspired man, could not be heard at a distance; but his gestures and animated looks, were visible. The infection caught the first ranks, and in a moment, like an electric shock, it pervaded the vast assembly. The king rose; he advanced to the preacher, and took from his hand a white cross, which had been sent him from Rome, and fixed it on his right shoulder. He then attempted to speak, but his voice was drowned in the general uproar. The crowd pressed towards the scaffold. Eleanor then took the cross, and after her the principal nobility. As the rest came up, they

were

were served with crosses; but so great was the demand, though a large parcel had been prepared, that soon there were no more to distribute. Still the cry for crosses continued, and the press was as violent as ever. Bernard would not lose the precious moment, he tore off his habit, which was white; ript it into crosses; and gave them to the multitude.—Never had such a scene been before exhibited.

As great preparations were necessary, the expedition was deferred to the next year. In the mean time, another meeting was called at Chartres. Here, among the means which were proposed to give success to the undertaking, the command of the army was unanimously offered to Bernard. He refused it, as became him, urging his ill health, and his inability to marshal soldiers and to march at their head. But he undertook another business to which he was more equal: this was, to rouse the emperor and the German nation to engage in the expedition.

He found Conrad at Francfort. Bernard, in secret, opened his commission to him, and as he loved his salvation, he exhorted him, not to lose the favorable moment. The emperor was not moved; he had business which engaged him at home; and he told Bernard, that he had heard Palestine was a great way off, and that



B O O K he was not now disposed to visit it. The saint  
VII. withdrew. But he resolved to try his strength on  
the Germans, and then to renew his attack on  
Conrad. He had observed, however, that the  
Germans were a cool and phlegmatic people,  
whom common impressions little moved, and that  
other means than those, must be used, which  
had inspired his own countrymen with ardor.  
He would address them in signs and wonders.

The account of the miracles, which he is then  
said to have worked, in the different towns in  
Germany, as recorded by eye-witnesses, is truly  
astonishing. I am at a loss what opinion to form;  
though I cannot persuade myself to believe, that  
heaven could have so manifestly interfered to  
promote a scheme, at once so extravagant in  
itself, and which was to end so disastrously.  
Bernard, religious, honest, conscientious, as he  
was, could not possibly have engaged in a settled  
plan of deception. I would rather think he was  
himself imposed on; and that these extraordinary  
facts were really no more than the common  
effects of a heated imagination, aided by ignorance  
and enthusiasm. They are not related with all  
their circumstances, and the relaters were evident-  
ly disposed to think them true.

True or false, the effect was one. The Ger-  
mans could not withstand the impression. They  
crowded round the saint, though the language



he spoke was unknown to them, and often so impetuouſly, that his own and the lives of his followers were ſometimes in danger, while he was giving ſpeech to the dumb, and hearing to the deaf. Every where they enrolled themſelves in the ſacred ſervice. — Again he met the emperor at Spire. Bernard addreſſed him in a public ſermon, and in private he held before him the glory of the enterpriſe, and the ſpiritual advantages of a penance, ſo eaſy and ſo honorable. Conrad had heard of the wonders he had worked before his people, and he ſaw how the torrent ran; he therefore promiſed that, he would lay the matter before his council, and that the next day he ſhould know the reſult. — The holy man was too wiſe to wait for the next day, or the cool deliberations of its council. While the emperor was at maſs, he appeared unasked in the pulpit, and harangued the aſſembly: then turning to Conrad, he ſaid: “Soon ſhall you  
“ alſo be called before the dread tribunal of your  
“ judge: and what anſwer will you make, you  
“ who now ungratefully reſuſe to move a ſtep  
“ in his ſervice, when an account ſhall be  
“ demanded of the territories, of the wealth, of  
“ the crown, of the armies, of the ſtrength of  
“ body and courage of mind, which he has  
“ beſtowed upon you?” — The emperor was ſtruck, and interrupting the preacher, he exclaimed:

BOOK

VII.

“ I acknowledge the goodness of God, and will be ungrateful no longer: I now see what is the will of heaven.” — The people shouted, and Conrad advancing took a cross from the hand of Bernard: they then went together to the altar, on which lay a standard, which the saint blessed, and delivered to the emperor.—At the same time Frederick Barbarossa his nephew, then duke of Suabia, and nobles innumerable, pinned the cross to their shoulders.

The time fixed for the *départure* of the armies was come, and the king of France once more met his people at Estampes. They deliberated on the route which should be taken. Many were disposed to go by sea, as the experience of the first crusade had taught them, that the fair promises of the Greeks were not to be relied on; and in this opinion they were joined by the ambassadors from Roger, king of Sicily, who, in the name of their master, offered ships and all necessary provisions. The advice, however, was over-ruled. They knew little of sailing, and would not expose themselves to the uncertain element. Besides, it was said, at the view of an army, so numerous and so splendid, the pusillanimous Greeks would only tremble. It was therefore resolved to pursue the road which Geoffrey of Bouillon had taken, as far as Constantinople. Of this the emperor was acquainted, who adopted the same plan.

In the assembly of Estampes, Suger of St. Denys was chosen regent of the kingdom, during the absence of the monarch, with the general approbation of all orders of the state. This was the highest compliment which could be paid to the exalted abilities of this excellent man, and the wisdom of his administration fully justified the choice. At any other time, indeed, the step would have been opposed; it would have roused the ambition and the jealousy of those, who, from birth or station, might have pretended to the important charge: at present, the great passions of the nation were engaged in another pursuit.

The German army was first in motion. It consisted of more than a hundred thousand fighting men, and Conrad was at their head. They marched through Hungary, Bulgaria, and Thrace. As they approached Constantinople, it appeared how little the Greeks were disposed to be their friends. — Manuel Comnenus, grandson to Alexius, who had seen the first crusade, was emperor of the East. He was a prince, as his historians relate, of a very various character; but his good qualities certainly preponderated, as the Latins themselves allow he was not without merit. They charge him, indeed, with perfidy, and with the basest treachery in their regard, while perhaps he was only prudent and politic, as became a wise prince. A hundred



BOOK VII. thousand Germans were under the walls of his capital, brave, enterprising, and licentious, and they were soon to be joined by as many French! He knew they had not forgotten, what they called the ill treatment of his grandfather; and besides, at the very time, Roger of Sicily, their friend and ally, was in open war with him, desolating his coasts, and plundering his subjects.— However, he received the emperor, whose brother-in-law he was, with much civility: he praised his design, his piety, and his courage; but he pressed him much to pursue his journey, as the weather was favorable, and as the transports were in readiness to convey his army into Asia. — In the mean while, he acquainted the infidels of the formidable preparations, which threatened their dominions, and gave them what other information might be most necessary. — Conrad with all his forces crossed the straits.

While the Imperial army was advancing towards Constantinople, Lewis began his march. The Roman pontiff had just arrived in France, whom he had consulted on the general business of the crusade. Together they had visited the relics of St. Denys, where the king took from the altar the sacred banner, called Oriflamme, and his holiness then gave him his benediction, putting, at the same time, on his shoulders the proper badge of a pilgrim. — The army of France was in nothing



inferior to that of the empire ; and its march was prosperous and unmolested, till they entered the Grecian territories. They advanced, however, and came within sight of Constantinople, about the beginning of October, in 1147.

Notwithstanding the ambushes, the groundless complaints, and the open attacks, by which his army had been daily irritated. Lewis proposed an interview with the emperor, and obtained it. They met at the Imperial palace in Constantinople, and if looks and gestures might be relied on, never was meeting more sincere. They were both about the age of twenty-five, both elegant, both handsome, both affable, and were both magnificently appareled, one as a warrior, the other in his Imperial robes. Manuel displayed before the king the riches of his palace, and the magnificence of his capital. He led him into the temple of St. Sophia ; he ravished his ears with music, and his taste with the delicacies of the East. In this he could gratify his own vanity ; he then hinted, as the army had recovered from the fatigue of their march, that it would be proper they should pursue their journey.— Soon after it was rumored that Conrad had gained a great victory, and that the East was submitting to his arms.

Lewis called a council of war. — It was the general opinion, that no more time should be lost. The Germans, they said, are reaping a full harvest

BOOK of glory, and with it all the booty of conquered  
VII. kingdoms. The king, however, hesitated: a large detachment from his army was not yet come up, and he had promised to wait their arrival. Still the cry was, that they should cross the Hellespont. When Geoffrey, bishop of Langres, a penetrating and shrewd man, whom the artifices of the Greeks had not imposed on, and who, in the report now circulated, saw their crafty design, rose in the assembly, and said: "Before we cross the Hellespont, my friends, let us be masters of Constantinople. Without this, all our attempts will be unsuccessful, and this army will perish. We must depend on the Greeks for provisions, and we must depend on their guides in a hostile and impracticable country. The scheme I propose to you is neither chimerical nor difficult: I have myself examined the walls of the city, which are weak and defenceless: or, if you will, we may seize on the aqueducts, which to them are the very sources of existence. You have, besides, a third option: meet them in the plain, and let those schismatics, debauched and enervated as they are, feel what it is to contend with men and with true believers."

Had the sound advice been followed, it would have been well for this devoted army; but many difficulties were raised, and some said that, having made a vow to bear their arms against the infidels,

they were no longer at liberty to change their destination. — They resolved to proceed; and, in a few days, the whole army was landed in Asia. BOOK  
VII.

Conrad, in the mean time, was advancing to the awful period of destruction. Whatever obstacles the malevolence of the Greeks could lay before him, them he hourly experienced. They shut their gates, they demanded an exorbitant price for bad provisions, and they cut off the straggling soldiers. But now the difficulties thickened round him. He had left Nicomedia behind him, and was in the enemy's country. His guides, on whom he was obliged to rely, led him forward, with assurances that, in a few days, they should see before them the wide and fertile plains of Lycaonia. The few days passed. The soldiers were worn down with fatigue, provisions failed them, the country grew more impracticable, and nothing met their eyes but mountains and never-ending forests, when news was brought, that the guides had gone off in the night-time, and that the sultan of Iconium with all his forces was coming down upon them.

The barbarous cries of the enemy were soon heard in the woods. Conrad rode through the ranks of his army, and strove to raise their drooping hearts. They formed into order, as well as the nature of the country would allow, and prepared to meet the coming storm. In a moment, the

BOOK

VII.

light-armed Saracens assailed them on all sides ; they discharged their arrows , with a sure and unerring arm , and suddenly wheeling round , broke their ranks , and disappeared. But again they turned to the charge. In vain did the brave Germans strive to come into action. Their armour was cumbrous and unwieldy , and their horses , famished and broken down , had no chance with the winged cavalry of the enemy. They fell by thousands. Conrad seeing all was lost , attempted to rally his men , and to retreat. He had been wounded by two arrows. It was not possible to effect it. Nor orders could be given , nor was his voice heard. The barbarians came on in greater numbers. He saw his stoutest men were fallen. In this distress , he fled , and was followed by a few who had not quitted his person. Among these was Frederic Barbarossa. His baggage was left to be plundered ; and the enemy completed their work by a general slaughter of what remained on the field. It is said that , before night , not a tenth part of the hundred thousand men who had seen the sun rise , survived the dreadful butchery ; and these were dispersed or wounded. — The emperor , however , escaped , and got safe to Nicea , at which place the army of France had just arrived.

It was a melancholy interview. — Here they halted for some days , that the wretched remains of the Imperial army might be collected , and to



settle the necessary order of the march. Lewis, young and impetuous, proposed to take the route which had been so fatal to Conrad; but he at last listened to more prudent counsels. They proceeded, therefore, through Lydia, bearing towards the sea, and arrived, without molestation, at Ephesus. Here the Emperor left them, and embarked for Constantinople. — In a valley, near Ephesus, the army encamped, and celebrated, in martial form, the feast of Christmas. They then continued their march towards Laodicea, and in a few days, arrived on the banks of the winding Meander.

This river, to which poetry has annexed so many pleasing ideas, was then swollen by the rains, and the torrents of melted snow which poured down from the mountains. It was besides, at all times, deep, and its banks were steep and rugged. Here the enemy whose spies had watched the progress of the christian army, divided into two bodies, waited their approach. They covered the hills on both sides the river. Lewis assembled his generals: they saw the danger which threatened, but unless they passed the river, it was evident, they must perish by famine. The river was found unfordable. For one whole day they marched up its bank, at every step galled by the arrows of the enemy. On the second, they discovered a ford, but the opposite landing was hardly practicable: however, they resolved to attempt it. The

B O O K  
VII.

king ordered the van to advance, and himself took charge of the rear. They advanced. At the same instant, the cloud broke from the hills, and the enemy, like a torrent, descended on both sides: their cries were terrible, and their bows were bent. The rear faced about: while the van, led on by heroes, drew their swords, and raising their bucklers over their heads, plunged into the stream. They passed it, and gained the steep ascent. The enemy, whose weapons had fallen without effect, retired in dismay, and the christians, forming as they came up, advanced into the plain. — Lewis, in the mean time, sword in hand, had attacked the Saracens, who imprudently bore down upon him, and having slaughtered and dispersed them, he returned triumphant to the river, and passed it unmolested. — A general attack was now made on the camp of the enemy, which they forced, and found it full of riches, and well furnished with provisions. — It is remarkable, that only one man, Milo de Nogent, was lost on this occasion. This surely was miraculous; and historians relate that a warrior, in silver armour, headed the French through the river, and first assailed the enemy!

The troops were ready to march the next morning, and they left the Meander, proud in the superiority of their strength, and prepared for greater dangers. They arrived at Laodicea. — Not

far from this place, on the road to Pisidia, through which they meant to pass, lay a ridge of mountains, rugged and of very difficult ascent, and behind them was a wide and fertile plain. Lewis ordered the vanguard to take possession of the heights, and there to halt, till the rear and baggage should have reached the summit. They ascended with alacrity; but perceiving from the top of the mountain that the sun was still high, and allured by the beauties of the plain below, they deliberated on the propriety of advancing, and resolved to proceed slowly onwards.

The infidels no sooner perceived the imprudent step, than with wonderful alertness they availed themselves of it, and hastening forward on the ridge of the hills, were ready to take possession of the ground, almost as soon as the van began to descend towards the plain. The rear, in the mean time, secure and confident, slowly ascended the rugged eminence. Very soon they were roused by the well-known cry, and looking up they discovered the barbarous host, which occupied every defile, and hung upon the mountain. There was no time for reflection. A shower of arrows brought instant death, while the nearer ranks advanced, and drew the cimeter. The brave Frenchmen received the sudden shock; but the first lines being slaughtered, or overwhelmed by numbers, the next fell back, and a scene of the

BOOK VII. most dreadful confusion ensued. All that the most determined valor could do, was still attempted: the rear pressed forward, but it was only to certain destruction; the baggage-waggons obstructed their passage, and where they found an outlet, it was to meet the arrows and the swords of the enemy. In the confusion, however, many escaped, and some had the good fortune to join their friends, who already had fixed their tents in the plain. — Night fell.

The king till this moment, with a few brave fellows by his side, had withstood the dreadful conflict; when darkness closed round him, and he found himself alone. In the heat of the engagement, he had had the presence of mind to order his secretary, Odon de Deuil, a monk, to get round to the plain, and to inform the van of the situation of his army. He therefore hoped that assistance might soon be at hand. The wild shrieks of the vaunting enemy, the wailings of the wounded, and the dying groans of men and horses, from all sides pierced his ears. Armed and bleeding he climbed up a tree, and from thence let himself down on the point of a rock, which the little light that remained discovered to him. But the same light soon betrayed him to a party of the enemy. They attacked him: but his armour was proof against their arrows, and his sword soon damped the courage of those who dared to



come within its reach. They knew him not to be the king, and they left him.—After some time, he again heard the tread of feet approaching towards him; but soon he perceived they were friends: he made himself known, and coming down from the rock, mounted a horse, which belonged to the party. Heaven still protected him. A while they wandered about, uncertain which way to turn, and hemmed in by danger. A path presented itself, which they followed, and as day began to break, to their joy they discovered the plain beneath them, and soon after met a detachment of the army, which was coming to their assistance. He entered the camp.

This at least was a fortunate event. But how was all their gladness saddened, when the day discovered the extent of their losses! Very few joined the camp, and soon was it evident, that all who were brave or distinguished had perished or been made prisoners. Nor did the evil stop here: their baggage was taken, their provisions destroyed, and their guides were dispersed. The enemy besides, had recovered heart from the victory, and they might expect fresh encounters and an increase of difficulties. The proud conquerors were seen hovering on the hills.

A council of war was summoned. The king proposed, as the danger which threatened was

BOOK imminent and common, that no attention should  
VII. be longer paid to rank or office, but that he should be chosen to the command of the army, whom experience and martial conduct had best fitted to the important charge. "I myself, said he, will set the first example of obedience: whatever post be allotted me, I will discharge it to the best of my abilities."—The proposition was received with applause, and they chose for their general one Gilbert, a soldier of fortune, whose knowledge of the military art was in great estimation. The pressing danger gave unanimity to their votes. Gilbert accepted the command. He then chose his subaltern generals; divided the army into three bodies; and allotted to each general his post. The king was stationed in the centre.—They began their march towards Pamphylia.

On the road lay two swampy rivulets. The enemy appeared in full force, prepared to dispute the passage. Gilbert ordered some light squadrons to advance: they charged with fury. The Saracens were thrown into disorder: and the christians passed the first rivulet. A general engagement then ensued, in which the infidels were defeated, and a great slaughter made.—From this time they pursued their march without molestation, but in great want of provisions, and arrived at Attalia, a town on the Mediterranean sea. Of such

importance

importance was discipline, and a due subordi- BOOK  
nation to command. VII,

At this place, the malevolence of the Greeks was more glaring than ever. They were not moved by the recital of the dangers, to which the army had been exposed, nor by the sufferings they had undergone, nor by the slaughter of their friends. They strove to aggravate their misfortunes by cruelty, and to add to their distress, by exactions the most oppressive: they even refused them the common necessities of life. — Lewis, with his generals, debated the arduous business. The army was reduced more than one half; they were without horses; the soldiers were spent with fatigue; the remaining journey to Antioch would require at least forty days; hosts of enemies beset the whole route: but by sea, three days might land them on a friendly shore. There was no room, it seemed, for hesitation. They applied to the Greeks for transports, who readily engaged to supply them; but after five weeks, very few were ready, and those of the smallest construction.

The army would submit no longer to this irritating usage. They sent to the king, to request, that he and his nobles would make use of the vessels which were ready, and that he would permit them to pursue their march by land, and join him at Antioch. They added, they would

## BOOK

## VII.

rather die by the sword of the enemy, than perish ignobly by famine; that they wished him a prosperous voyage; that as to themselves, providence, they trusted, would be their guide; and that, if they must fall, it should be like men and soldiers of Christ.

The prince was much affected. He referred the matter to his council, who agreed that he should accept the proposals of the army. Before he left them, however, he neglected no measure which prudence and his own benevolent heart could suggest, for their present relief, and future safety. He gave them two generals, prudent and experienced officers; he distributed large sums of money among the soldiers; he obtained guides for them from the governor of Attalia, and the promise of an escort, which was to conduct them as far as Tarsus in Cilicia; and he purchased all the horses, he could procure, for the officers, and to convey the baggage. Moreover, he obtained leave for the sick and wounded to be lodged in the city, till they should be in a condition to travel; and with his own eyes he saw them properly distributed. After this he sailed, and landed in the neighbourhood of Antioch, through a perilous sea, and after three weeks voyage.

The army, soon after the departure of the king, began their march. But hardly had they



loft fight of the walls of Attalia, when they were met by the enemy, fluffed with new courage, and bold from numbers. The chriftians withftood their onfet, and repulfed them: but they were not in a condition to purfue the flying enemy.—The guides and efkort now waited on the generals to inform them, that they could proceed no further, that the feafon was too far advanced; and that the infidels, they faw, were too powerful to be refifted by fuch inferior troops. No intreaties could prevail. They fent a miffenger to the governor; but all they could obtain was, that they might return, and encamp under the walls, till an occafion offered for transporting them elfewhere. Even here they were not fafe: the Saracens daily annoyed them, and the citizens refufed them common protection. They died by thoufands.

Betwixt three and four thoufand refolute men, unable any longer to bear fuch treatment, determined once more to attempt the journey. The infidels allowed them, for fome days, to proceed unmolefted. They came to a broad and rapid river; and here the enemy appeared. To pafs it was impoffible, and to retreat was dangerous. They debated for a moment, and in that moment they were furrounded. The general of the Saracens advanced, and offered them peace and the friendship of his people, if they would

BOOK VII. renounce their religion and join his standard; otherwise they must submit to slavery. — The brave men were shocked at the alternative; but as the word *slavery* makes an impression we are the least able to resist, they chose the former, and bowed their heads to the turban. — What remained of the army at Attalia we hear no more of.

Raymond, uncle to the queen, as I have said, was prince of Antioch. When he heard that Lewis was landed in his territories, he marched out, in great pomp, to meet him, and conducted him to the city. He was received with all the honors due to his person; and the endearing caresses of Raymond and his nobles seemed, for a moment, to still the troubles of his agitated mind. He had a distressful tale to tell, of perfidious friends, of potent enemies, of perilous adventures, and of routed armies. Raymond had flattered himself, that he should see a triumphant conqueror, who would bring new glory to Antioch, who would strengthen his present territories, and help to extend them by his arms.

Lewis, indeed, had lost his army; but in a short time he had the comfort to see himself surrounded by a brilliant and martial train of noblemen and knights, part of whom had accompanied him and others had since joined his standard. These the prince of Antioch lavishly courted, and he proposed to the king to engage

in some splendid undertaking, wherein might be displayed the valor of his brave Frenchmen, and the christian cause be promoted. The conquest of Aleppo, he said, where resided a proud sultan, would be a glorious achievement. This proposal he urged with the most flattering expressions: he accompanied them with presents; and the queen joined her efforts to those of her uncle. Lewis could not be prevailed on. He had a vow, he said, solemnly made to heaven, which could only be discharged at Jerusalem, and thither he must go. But there was another circumstance very heavy on his heart, which rendered his stay at Antioch daily more painful. This he could not mention.

His queen, the elegant, the airy, the sprightly Eleanor, had accompanied the army in all its marches. She had figured in the gay court of Constantinople, had seen the triumphant passage of the Meander, and fortunately was encamped in the plain, during the disastrous defeat on the mountains. The fair pilgrim, it seems, had found but little relish in the perils and toils of war. The king had a thousand cares to engage his attention; and probably she had not found him more agreeable under the helmet and in the dusty plains of Asia, than she had thought him in his own palace, with his cropt hair and shaven chin. By the advice of Peter Lombard, bishop

BOOK  
VII.

of Paris, who assured him that God detested long hair, he had cut off the profane ornaments. Eleanor rallied him for it; when he observed that, pleasantry on such serious subjects was very ill placed. "I was told, replied she, that "I was to marry a prince; but your Majesty, "I find, is a monk." In matrimony, contempt and hatred are very nearly allied. — During the march, it does not appear, that she had given the king any cause for complaint: but at Antioch, when she began to breathe, when she looked back on what she had suffered, and when gaiety and pleasure courted her smiles in their most alluring forms, Eleanor could not withstand their impression: she thought, she might justly take some indulgence for past discomforts, and make up for a year of *ennui*. — The prince, her uncle, was her principal favorite, and a young Turk, it is said, named Saladin, beauteous and lovely as the son of Myrrha. — Eleanor was married in her fifteenth year, and was now about the age of twenty-four.

The king, naturally benevolent, mild, and religious, felt more poignantly this ungrateful treatment, which, he did not think, he had deserved. Immediately he gave orders to his little army to march, and he signified to the queen that he expected she would be ready to accompany him. This she did not wish to do; and the prince of Antioch, in concert with her, even dared



publicly to insult his majesty, hoping that, in irritation of mind, he might retire precipitately, and be satisfied to visit Jerusalem alone. Lewis took the advice of his friends, who were of his opinion, that the queen should, by no means, be left behind, to dishonor herself and disgrace the majesty of her husband. — The nobility with their men lay encamped without the walls. It was agreed that, the next night, one of the gates should be kept open. The king compelled Eleanor, who was not prepared for the adventure, to accompany him, and all together they took the road towards Jerusalem.—Here he found the emperor Conrad, who, having wintered at Constantinople, was first arrived, and waited his coming.

BOOK  
VII.

Jerusalem received him with every mark of distinction. Its young king Baldwin, and his mother Melisenda, were delighted: they had apprehended, with some reason, that the intriguing and selfish spirit of Raymond might have detained him at Antioch.

The ceremony of visiting the holy places was first to be discharged. This the king, with all his followers, in solemn pomp, performed, habited like pilgrims, and accompanied by the prince of Jerusalem and his court. — Some expedition, they then thought, should be undertaken against the infidels, and a grand assembly was ordered to meet at Ptolemais. The day was fixed.

Palestine had not yet seen so gorgeous a show.

BOOK  
VII.

The emperor came with his attendant bishops; and the cardinal legate, with Henry duke of Austria, his brother, Frederick duke of Suabia, his nephew, with many other powerful lords and gentlemen. — Lewis was accompanied by an equal number of bishops, and by a cardinal legate, by Robert count of Dreux, his brother, by Henry of Champagne, his son-in-law, by Thiery count of Flanders, and many other distinguished noblemen. — Baldwin of Jerusalem, and his mother, were not less splendidly attended.

It was debated, what was most proper to be done for the welfare of the christian republic in Asia. Various measures were proposed: but the siege of Damascus was finally determined. The conquest of this place, one of the most considerable in Syria, would at once give glory to their arms, and be generally beneficial; for from hence the Saracens made daily incursions into the christian territories. — Orders were given for the troops to march. They were divided into three corps, commanded by their respective monarchs. The young king of Jerusalem took the post of danger: he wished to signalize his prowess before his royal visitors, and he led on to the attack.

It is not my intention to detail the particulars of this memorable siege. The christians performed feats of wonder; nor were they less valiantly opposed. But when it seemed that the place

must soon surrender; whether by some strange fatality, or secret treason, or jealousy among the commanders, the besiegers were drawn off from that side of the walls which could resist no longer, and were directed to make a fresh attack on the opposite quarter. — Here nothing could succeed. They were exposed to the darts of the enemy; the walls were strong; the springs dried up; and no forage could be found for the horses. In this extremity, the European princes resolved to raise the siege: they saw they were betrayed, or that heaven, whose battles they wished to fight, was not disposed to favor their romantic efforts.

The emperor soon after returned to Germany. — Lewis remained in Palestine till the following spring, when he embarked for Calabria, visited Rome, and arrived in his own kingdom in 1149, after an absence of two years, worn down by anxiety, and only rich in the reputation of having engaged in a wild project, which could not have ended more disastrously. — From this time, the condition of the Oriental christians became daily worse. The infidels, seeing the successful efforts of numerous armies, laughed at the vain attempt; and on a nearer view, began to despise those mighty warriors, the bare mention of whose names had once filled them with terror<sup>23</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> I have followed, in this account of the crusade, Fleury, Daniel, and Maimbourg, who had consulted the best sources.

## BOOK

## VII.

Thus have I described the principal events up to the year 1160, and exhibited the general features of the period, in church and state. Little else remains; only as the reader has seen much of Bernard, of Peter the venerable, and of Suger, he may wish to know how long they survived the transactions I have related. They did not long survive.

Death and  
character  
of Suger.

Suger, abbot of St. Denis, and minister of state, died in 1152, a little more than two years after the return of his master from the holy land. He had strenuously opposed that mad expedition; but what chance had cool reason and political discernment, against the enthusiasm and wonder-working powers of his friend and contryman, the abbot of Clairvaux? The kingdom he administered with prudence, firmness, and integrity. Great as were the foreign expenses, his master was always supplied with money, and the subject at home was not oppressed. By every argument, he strove to avert the fatal divorce betwixt Lewis and his queen; and as long as he lived, it was not accomplished. He saw the evils that probably must fall on his country, by permitting so large a territory, as was Eleanor's dowry, to be again severed from the royal domain: but he could not see that, in the first six weeks, she would marry Henry of England. Suger was the Sully of France in the twelfth century.



As abbot, his life was exemplary, and his manners irreproachable. In the beginning of his administration, having found his monastery undisciplined and enervated, he was himself, then unused to conventual regularity, carried down the stream: he was prodigal in his expenses, sumptuous in his table, and in his dress and attendants gay and splendid. In five years the gaudy scene was over. He reformed his abbey; and was himself the first to set the example of that rigid discipline and severe morality, which alone give perfection to the monastic institute. Suger had formed a plan of quitting every civil employment, and was just then retiring to St. Denys, when the unanimous voice of the people called him to the regency of the state.

He was of low extraction. His figure wanted comeliness, and his countenance dignity: but his mental qualities were of a superior cast. His understanding was comprehensive, his judgment sound, his memory prodigious, and his penetration intuitive. When he spoke, there was grace in his manner, and fluency in his expression; nor did any subject seem to him either new or embarrassing. These qualities were still heightened by a modesty without affectation, and a gravity without sternness. He was mild, beneficent, disinterested, and friendly. The king loved him as his parent; the nobility respected his abilities;

B O O K  
VII.

and the people adored his virtues. He died in his seventieth year. The king attended his funeral, and wept over his bier. He has been called the father of his country <sup>24</sup>.

Death and  
character of  
Bernard.

The year following, in 1153, died also Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux.—I have related enough of his life, to convince the reader that he was truly an extraordinary man. Thus does an eminent writer, well qualified to appreciate merit, speak of him <sup>25</sup>. Bernard, says he, I regard as the prodigy of his age.—Heaven, it seemed, had with pleasure, assembled in him alone, all the endowments of nature and grace. He was descended from noble and virtuous parents. In his person he was handsome, and his mind was perfect. Sprightly and penetrating, he could discern with accuracy, and could judge with confidence. His heart was generous, his sentiments elevated, his resolution unshaken, and his will ever upright and ever constant.—Nor had art neglected to improve the work of nature. His education was the best which the age could give: early he had been instructed in religion, and in the human sciences. With much reflection he daily studied the word of God, and he read the holy fathers. In the pulpit he was animated and nervous; but his language was too flowery, though adapted to the taste of his hearers. The same defect pervades

<sup>24</sup> Daniel, vol. iii.

<sup>25</sup> Fleury, Disc. 8.

his writings. — We must not forget that Bernard was a saint; for his humility was profound, his zeal ardent, his charity unbounded, and the gift of miracles marked him for the favorite of heaven. — The portrait, perhaps, is too highly colored.

But if the historian may be permitted to break through that dazzling glare, which miracles and his inspired air threw round him, he will discover some shades in the character of Bernard; and where have we seen humanity without them? They help to form its beauty. — He was austere, meddling, and acrimonious, zealous over much. — His austerity began with himself, and extended to others: when not called on he interfered in the concerns of all men: he was bitter, and even abusive, against those he esteemed the enemies of truth: and we have beheld his zeal, precipitate and inflexible, till it had involved two kingdoms in the most disastrous undertaking. When he was blamed as the author of these misfortunes, his reply was; that the judgments of heaven were inscrutable, and that the sins of the crusaders had brought ruin on their arms. But could he think, when, in the plain of Vezelai, he insisted the banditti of France, that their hearts were converted; or that the hundred thousand Germans, whom the sight of his miracles compelled to arms, would not be guilty of a hundred thousand excesses? The conduct of the first crusaders had clearly said, what was to be expected from such expeditions.

BOOK  
VII.

His ascendancy over the minds of men, and his sway in the councils of Europe were astonishing. From the retirement of his cell, in the vale of Clairvaux, abstracted from the world, and conversing with heaven, he was called to the courts of princes, to decide their quarrels, or to aid them with his advice. Nor could it be said, that he was there displaced or out of character: his own personal consideration gave him a respect above titles, and an influence which neither years, nor abilities, nor office could bestow.—At Rome, of whose prerogative he was too lavish an admirer, Bernard was the soul of design, and the spring of action. Never did the holy see possess a truer friend. Over Eugenius, who had been his disciple, he retained an authority, which, perhaps, was more honorable to the scholar, than the master. If Suger was less a saint than Bernard, the former, I think, had a sounder judgment, was a better politician, a more experienced minister, and, perhaps, a more useful citizen. — The abbot of Clairvaux died in his sixty-third year, having founded and annexed to his order, seventy-two monasteries in different parts of Europe. “The church, concludes Fleury, “honors his memory on the day of his death; “and the learning, the zeal, the piety, which his “writings display, have justly given him a place, “though the last, among the fathers of the church.”



Within three years from this time, in 1156, expired the other luminary of France, Peter the venerable. — Already I have said so much of this good man, and with a view of depicting his character, that more cannot be necessary. For thirty-five years he governed his order with singular prudence, which then consisted of more than three hundred houses, and two thousand dependent convents. The appellation of *venerable* which he acquired, was not the consequence of years; for he was chosen abbot in his twenty-eighth year, and died in his sixty-third; but it was due to his grave deportment, to his exemplary life, and to his great erudition. He entered little into political business, only as far as the interest of Cluni was concerned. His abilities were less brilliant than those of St. Bernard, his friend and his admirer; but his sense was sound, and his judgment unbiaſſed. Nature and her laws were not obedient to his voice, for I do not find that he worked any miracles; but his dispositions were mild, his heart benevolent, and his hand was ever open to relieve the distressed. — He wrote against the Jews, and he engaged one Robert, an Englishman, archdeacon of Pampeluna in Spain, well versed in the Arabic language, to translate the Koran of Mahomet into Latin. He rewarded the translator munificently, and himself undertook to refute the absurd rhapsody. — Peter

BOOK  
VII.

Death of  
Peter the  
venerable.

**B O O K** Maurice, I have before observed, was the last  
**VII.** celebrated man of his order, and with him set  
 the sun of Cluni<sup>26</sup>.

Hardly, I think, can it be said with propriety that an age is dark, which possessed three such men as I have now described. Nor did they stand alone. Others there were in Italy, Germany, and England, not equally eminent; but whose abilities were great, whose learning was not contemptible, and whose virtues were exemplary. These I would with pleasure exhibit, were not the ground already too thickly set with objects.— It is often the practice of modern writers to describe unfavorably, the character of passed times, either because to blame is more congenial with their humor than to give praise; or because they are led by the prejudices of others, which they have not taken care to shake off; or because to copy some favorite author is much less laborious than to study the original; or because they may fancy, that themselves and the age they live in, will appear more resplendent, in proportion to the shades which are thrown on the more distant object. At all events, the twilight of the twelfth century (for such at least it may be called) was necessary to prepare the rising of that auspicious day, whose brilliant splendor now surrounds us. With our posterity, perhaps,

<sup>26</sup> Fleury, vol. xiv. xv.

it will be made a question, whether as yet we have passed its dawn.

BOOK

VII.

Heloisa.

In the peaceful cloisters of the Paraclet, where we had left Heloisa, there she still was after a period of twenty years. She had not engaged in its turbulent scenes: but from her cell she might have contemplated their progress, and bewailed their unfortunate exit. The death of Peter the venerable would be a real loss.—It may be remembered that, in her correspondence with Abeillard on the origin and duties of the monastic institute, she had strongly urged the propriety of mitigating its severity in favor of women. Not then so fervent, or less warmed by that enviable enthusiasm which can find delight in pain and self-denials, she thought it reasonable to plead for every innocent indulgence: was not the path of life sufficiently beset with thorns? And was the traveller with his own hands to add to their number? In process of time, as circumstances altered, or as the cares of office, perhaps, soured her mind, or as it hardened by age, Heloisa adopted a more rigid plan, the constitutions of which she herself framed, and introduced into the rule of the Paraclet. The substance of these constitutions I will give to the reader: he may have heard much of nuns, and not know in what practices their lives are spent.

## BOOK

## VII.

Having observed that all religious instruction must take its origin from Christ, who practised the virtues of poverty, of humility, and of obedience, she proceeds. I.—“ We strive, as far as in us lies, to imitate the lives of the first christians, by having all things in common. What is given to us, that we divide as far as it will go. If there be not enough for all, they are first served who want it most. ”

II.—“ Our dress is ordinary and simple, made of the coarsest wool and flax.—But in this, as in our beds, if sometimes we have not all that may seem necessary, let it be remembered, that we have renounced the world and its conveniences.”

III.—“ We eat the bread that is laid before us, sometimes wheaten, and sometimes made of other grain. In the refectory our common fare is legumes, or such roots as the garden gives us. Milk, eggs, and cheese are rarely served; and fish only when the kindness of our neighbours supplies us. Our wine is mixed with water.—At supper only salad or fruit is allowed us; and when these fail, we bear it without murmuring.”

IV. —“ Only the abbess and prioress have any right to command. Without their permission no one can presume to go out of the enclosure, or to speak, or to give, or to receive, the smallest trifle. ”



V.—“Would our strength permit us; we should  
“till our lands, and live by labor. But we cannot.  
“We therefore call in the aid of lay-brothers.  
“and lay-sisters. — Any alms, which the piety of  
“the faithful offers, we do not refuse.”

VI.—“We rise before break of day, and proceed  
“to the church to *matins*. — After this, according  
“to the season of the year, either we retire, for  
“a short time, to our beds, or we meet in the  
“chapter-house, to read or work. — When the  
“bell rings, we again go to church, where *prime*  
“is said, and after that, the *morning-mass* — Again  
“we assemble in the chapter-house to confess  
“publicly our faults, and to receive correction.  
“Here, on solemn feasts, a sermon is preached.—  
“After chapter, if there be time, we read till  
“*terce* or nine o'clock. — Then follow *high-mass*  
“and *sext*, after which we read or work till *none*  
“or three o'clock. — At three we take our meal,  
“silent and recollected. — This finished, we return,  
“giving thanks to God, to the church, and from  
“thence to the chapter-house, where one of the  
“nuns, whose duty it is, makes a discourse to  
“the assembly. — If there be time, we then remain  
“in the cloisters till the hour of *vespers*. These are  
“always sung. — After *vespers* we return to the  
“cloisters, where, in silence and meditation, we  
“wait the hour of *collation* or supper. — After

BOOK " supper, *complin* is sung in the church, and we  
 VII. " remain in prayer, till a sign is given, at which  
 " all rise from their knees; and then sprinkled  
 " with holy water by the superior, they proceed  
 " in procession through the cloisters to the dormitory, where each one turns to her bed, and  
 " blessing God, retires to rest ".

Thus lived Heloisa and her nuns; and with some accidental variety, the same continues to be the rule of most orders of religious women. It is severe and uninviting; but the mind habitually forms to any thing. The fortunate circumstance is, that every moment of the day has its allotted duty: there is no time for idle speculation, and consequently no time for the ingress of those ideas, from which ennui, uneasiness, and misery spring. Their days flow uniformly on, but rapidly from uniformity; the stream is not ruffled, for their desires are composed, and their affections even; and they meet their last hour with more than philosophic fortitude:

To sounds of heav'nly harps they die away,  
 And melt in visions of eternal day.

While the abbess had been laudably engaged in new-modelling the internal government of her convent, she had not neglected its more

<sup>27</sup> Op. Abail. p. 198.

worldly concerns. I before mentioned the bulls she had obtained from Rome to confirm to the Paraclet such donations as had been made to it. To these afterwards some very considerable additions were made, all which received the same solemn sanction. I find a bull of Eugenius, which specifically mentions every acre of land and every tenement, belonging to the abbey in 1147, one of Anastasius, and three of Adrian. The latter seems particularly well-affected to the Paraclet; he speaks in high terms of the virtuous lives of Heloisa and her sisters; he grants them the petition they had made for leave to bury within the precincts of the convent the bodies of their benefactors; and he denounces the indignation of God and of the holy apostles against all those, who shall dare to infringe or to oppose the letter of his mandate<sup>28</sup>. — Nothing more was necessary to perfect this establishment, and to give it a stability which, in the ordinary course of human events, might last for ages.

It was now the year eleven hundred and sixty-three, and Heloisa had entered into her sixty-third year. — She fell sick. — History tells us not what her disorder was, nor does it relate the circumstances of her death. A more modern author only says that, when she saw her end approaching,

Her death.

<sup>28</sup> Op. Abeil. p. 353.

BOOK VII. she turned to her sisters, who stood weeping round her; exhorted them to submission and to the practice of every christian virtue; and then ordered that her body should be laid in the tomb by the side of Abeillard<sup>29</sup>. Soon after she expired. It was on a Sunday, and on the seventeenth of May.

Her obsequies were honored by the most splendid attendance of the nobility and clergy of the province: a solemn service was performed for the repose of her soul; and her dying request was faithfully executed. They saw the tomb of Abeillard opened, which had been shut for twenty years, and in it were laid the cold remains of the once lively, learned, religious, and benevolent Heloisa.

I will not attempt to delineate her character, as it could only be a repetition of what, perhaps I have already too much repeated. — On her monument were engraved four lines, barbarous and bad indeed!

Hoc tumulo abbatissa jacet prudens Heloissa.  
 Paraclitum statuit, cum Paraclito requiescit.  
 Gaudia sanctorum sua sunt super alta polorum;  
 Nos meritis precibusque suis exaltet ab imis.

They will not bear to be translated, — To commemorate the learned abilities of Heloisa, it

<sup>29</sup> Not. Quercet. p. 1195. Vie d'Abeil. p. 321.



is said that, for many years after her death, the nuns of the Paraclet, at the feast of Whitsuntide, performed the service of the day in Greek <sup>30</sup>. The practice only ceased, when the knowledge of the language was lost amongst them.

But in the course of six hundred years, in the different changes, which the repair of buildings and other events have introduced, care has been taken not to separate their dust. In 1497 the tomb was moved, and again in 1630, when the bones of the lovers, if so they may be called, were found entire. They were distinguished by their size.

The abbey of the Paraclet seems ever to have retained a great respect for the memory of their illustrious founders; though a traveller, who was there, not many years ago, says that the community knew little of the affecting part of their story <sup>31</sup>. — The late abbess, of the house of Rochefoucauld, in 1766, requested some gentlemen of the academy of Paris to compose an epitaph for their tomb. She was disgusted with the barbarous lines that hitherto had marked the stone, where Abeillard and Heloisa lay. She did not live to see it executed; but the epitaph was written. Her successor, I believe, the present abbess, Madame de Roucy, pursued the laudable

<sup>30</sup> Vie d'Abeil. p. 328.

<sup>31</sup> Annual Register, anno 1768.

BOOK design, and on a marble stone engraved the  
 VII. following elegant inscription.

Hic

Sub eodem marmore jacent,

Hujus monasterii

Conditor, Petrus Abeillardus,

Et Abbatissa prima, Heloisa:

Olim Studiis, ingenio, amore, infaustis nuptiis

Et poenitentia;

Nunc æterna, quod speramus, felicitate

Conjuncti.

Petrus Abeillardus obiit vigesima prima

Aprilis, Anno 1142:

Heloisa, decima septima Maii 1163.

Curis Carolæ de Roucy, Paracleti

Abbatissæ

1779.

## IN ENGLISH.

Here

Under the same stone repose

Peter Abeillard, the founder,

And Heloisa, the first abbess,

Of this monastery.

Alike in dispositions and in love,

They were once united in the same pursuits,

The same fatal marriage, and the same repentance;

And now, in eternal happiness,

We trust, they are not divided.

Peter Abeillard died the twenty-first of April, 1142:

And Heloisa the seventeenth of May, 1163.

THE  
LETTERS  
OF  
ABEILLARD and HELOISA.

From the collection of Amboise.

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*The letter of Abeillard to his friend, which gave occasion to the following correspondence, should properly have a place here: But, as the whole substance of it is contained in the foregoing history, and it is besides extremely long, I take the liberty to omit it. They who have read the history, will not want it; and they who have not, would be little disposed to read the tedious memoirs from which it is taken.*

LETTER I.

HELOISA TO ABEILLARD.

A LETTER of consolation you had written to a friend, my dearest Abeillard, was lately, as by chance, put into my hands. The superscription, in a moment, told me from whom it came; and the sentiments I felt for the writer, compelled

me to read it more eagerly. I had lost the reality: I hoped therefore from his words, a faint image of himself, to draw some comfort. But alas! for I well remember it, almost every line was marked with gall and wormwood. It related the lamentable story of our conversion, and the long list of your own unabating sufferings.

Indeed, you amply fulfilled the promise you there made to your friend, that, in comparison of your own, his misfortunes should appear as nothing, or as light as air.—Having exposed the persecutions you had suffered from your masters, and the cruel deed of my uncle, you were naturally led to a recital of the hateful and invidious conduct of Albericus of Reims, and Lotulphus of Lombardy. By their suggestions, your admirable work on the Trinity was condemned to the flames, and yourself were thrown into confinement. This you did not omit to mention. The machinations of the abbot of St. Denys, and of your false brethren, are then brought forward; but chiefly, for from them you had most to suffer, the calumnious aspersions of those false apostles, Norbert and Bernard, whom envy had roused against you. It was even, you say, imputed as a crime to you, to have given the name of Paraclet, contrary to the common practice, to the oratory you had erected. In fine, the incessant persecutions of that cruel



tyrant of St. Gildas and of those execrable monks, whom yet you call your children, and to which, at this moment, you are exposed, close the melancholy tale of a life of sorrow.

Who, think you, could read or hear these things, and not be moved to tears? What then must be my situation? The singular precision, with which each event is related, could but more strongly renew my sorrows. I was doubly agitated, because I perceived the tide of danger was still rising against you. Are we then to despair of your life? And must our breasts, trembling at every sound, be hourly alarmed by the rumors of that terrible event?

For Christ's sake, my Abeillard, and he, I trust, as yet protects you, do inform us, and that repeatedly, of each circumstance of your present dangers. I and my sisters are the sole remains of all your friends. Let us, at least, partake of your joys and sorrows. The condolence of others is used to bring some relief to the sufferer; and a load laid on many shoulders is more easily supported. But should the storm subside a little, then be even more solicitous to inform us, for your letters will be messengers of joy. In short, whatever be their contents, to us they must always bring comfort; because this, at least, they will tell us, that we are remembered by you.

How pleasing are the letters of absent friends,

Seneca, I remember, teaches us by his own example. "I thank you, says he to his friend Lucilius, for your frequent letters. By this you do all you can to be in my company. The moment I open your letters, I see Lucilius before me." And, indeed, if the portraits of our friends can give us pleasure, and ease the pain of absence, by the weak impressions they make; what may not be said of letters, which speak the genuine sentiments of the dear absent friend? — God be thanked! no invidious passion can forbid, and no obstacle can hinder this manner of your being present with us. On your side let no indifference, I pray, be a retardment to it.

You wrote to your friend a long epistle, and to alleviate his misfortunes you recounted your own. By this too plain narration, intended for his comfort, you have added much to our sorrows. The hand which poured balm into his wounds, only served to widen ours: it even added some fresh gashes to our long-bleeding bosoms. And will you, who are so anxious to ease the pain, which other hands have given, refuse to heal the wounds yourself have made? You complied, I own, with the desires of a friend and of a fellow-creature; and in so doing, the great duties of friendship and of society were fulfilled: but to us, Abeillard, you are bound by a stronger tie. We are not your friends only and your fellow-creatures: the

tendrest, affections have united us, for the inhabitants of the Paraclet are your daughters. Even, if nature or religion can suggest a more tender name, to that we are entitled.

To prove this, no arguments are necessary. Even were we silent, the walls of our monastery would proclaim it. Under God, you alone were the founder of this place; you alone erected its oratory; and you alone established its congregation. You raised nothing upon the foundations of others. Whatever the eye sees is your erection. This solitude, the retreat of wild beasts, and the receptacle of thieves, had not known the habitations of domestic life. But you, on the very dens of those beasts, and in the lurking holes of robbers, where the name of God had not been heard, raised a temple to his name, and you dedicated it to his Holy Spirit. To this the donations of kings or princes did not contribute: you wanted not their assistance; for your own powers were great and ample. From all quarters an almost infinite number of scholars was seen crowding to be instructed by you. They supplied whatever else was necessary. Even churchmen, who had been used to live on the benefactions of others; whose hands were ever open to receive but not to give; became here profuse, and even importunate to pour in their contributions.

Our new establishment, therefore, is strictly

yours. But, can the young plant prosper, if it be not often watered with peculiar care? We are women, Abeillard, by nature weak and delicate. Thus, had our society been long formed, it would still be exposed to much danger. But now, if you give us not all your care and all your diligence, how shall we brave the storm? The apostle says: "I have planted, Apollo has watered, but God has given the increase." He is writing to the Corinthians, whom he had lately converted to the christian faith: his own disciple Apollo, had then given them further instructions; and divine grace had completed the work. But you cultivate a vineyard, which you have not planted; and your sacred admonitions are lost on an ungrateful soil. I speak of the monks of St. Gildas, of which you are abbot. Rather recollect then what you owe to us. You preach to them, but you preach in vain. Your words are pearls which you throw to swine. The treasures, which are lost on them, should be kept for us, who are docile, who are obedient. And you, who are so prodigal to your enemies, do reflect on what you owe to your own children.—But I will say nothing of others: think only how much you are indebted to me. Whatever obligations bind you to the devout part of my sex, are all concentrated in your Heloisa.

You need not be told, how many treatises



the holy fathers of the church have written for our instruction, and how earnestly they have labored to inform, to advise, and to console us. Must my ignorance suggest knowledge to the learned Abeillard? — Long ago, indeed, when my mind was weak in the first impressions of duty, your neglect of me surprised me not a little. Neither moved by religion, nor by love for me, nor by the example of the holy fathers, did you ever aim to fix my fluctuating mind: not even when long grief had worn me down, did you come to see me, or even send me one line of comfort. Yet, surely after the bond of matrimony had cemented our union, your obligations to me became more binding. Who does not know how immoderate was the love I bore you; and from thence have I no pretensions to a peculiar return?

My Abeillard, you well know how much I lost in losing you: and that infamous act of treachery, which, by a cruelty before unheard of, deprived me of you, even tore me from myself. The loss was great indeed, but the manner of it was doubly excruciating. — When the cause of grief is most pungent, then should consolation apply her strongest medicines. But it is you only can administer relief: by you I was wounded, and by you I must be healed. It is in your power alone to give me pain, to give me joy, and to give me comfort. And it is

you only that are obliged to do it. — I have obeyed the last tittle of all your commands; and so far was I unable to oppose them, that, to comply with your wishes, I could bear to sacrifice myself. One thing remains, which is still greater, and will hardly be credited: my love for you had risen to such a degree of phrenzy, that to please you, it even deprived itself of what alone in the universe it valued, and that for ever. No sooner did I receive your commands, than I quitted at once the habit of the world, and with it all the reluctance of my nature. I meant that you should be the sole possessor of whatever I had once a right to call my own.

Heaven knows! in all my love it was you, and you only I fought for. I looked for no dowry, no alliances of marriage. I was even insensible to my own pleasures: nor had I a will to gratify. All was absorbed in you. I call Abeillard to witness. — In the name of *wife* there may be something more holy, something more imposing; but the name of *mistress* was ever to me a more charming sound — The more I humbled myself before you, the greater right I thought, I should have to your favor; and thus also I hoped the less to injure the splendid reputation you had acquired.

This circumstance, on your own account, you did not quite forget to mention in the letter to

your

your friend. You related also some of the arguments I then urged, to deter you from that fatal marriage; but you suppressed the greater part, by which I was induced to prefer love to matrimony, and liberty to chains. I call heaven to witness! Should Augustus, master of the world, offer me his hand in marriage, and secure to me the uninterrupted command of the universe, I should deem it at once more eligible and more honorable to be called the mistress of Abeillard, than the wife of Cæsar. The source of merit is not in riches or in power: these are the gifts of fortune; but virtue only gives worth and excellence.

The woman, who prefers a rich to a poor man, shows she has a venal soul. In a husband, it is his wealth, and not himself, which she admires; and to her, who marries with this view, some reward may be due, but no gratitude. It is clear that I have not misconstrued her intentions: propose but a richer match and if not too late, she will embrace it with ardor. The truth of my opinion the learned Aspasia has confirmed, in a conversation with Xenophon and his wife, as related by Æschines the disciple of Socrates. When to effect a reconciliation betwixt them, she had proposed this reasoning, Aspasia thus concludes: "When you have got so far, as mutually to be convinced that there lives not a

“ better man, and a more fortunate woman, all  
“ your thoughts will be directed to produce the  
“ greatest good: Xenophon will be happy in  
“ the reflection that he is married to the best  
“ of women, and she, on her side, that her  
“ husband is the best of men.”

These sentiments are beautiful: they seem the production rather of wisdom herself, than of philosophy. — But in the married state, should this favorable opinion be even grounded on error, how charming is it to be thus deceived! It produces love, and on this rests the surest pledge of mutual fidelity; while purity of mind co-operates far more efficaciously than her sister virtue.

But that happiness which in others is, sometimes, the effect of fancy, in me was the child of evidence. They might think their husbands perfect, and were happy in the idea; but I knew that you were such, and the universe knew the same. Thus the more my affection was secured from all possible error, the more steady became its flame. Where was found the king or the philosopher that had emulated your reputation? Was there a village, a city, a kingdom, that did not ardently wish even to see you? When you appeared in public, who did not run to behold you? And when you withdrew, every neck was stretched, every eye sprang forward to pursue you. The married and the unmarried women, when Abeillard was away, longed for his company;



and, when he was present, every bosom was on fire. No lady of distinction, no princess, that did not envy Heloisa the possession of her Abeillard.

You possessed, indeed, two qualifications, a tone of voice, and a grace in singing, which gave you the control over every female heart. These powers were peculiarly yours; for I do not know that they ever fell to the share of any other philosopher. To soften, by playful amusement, the stern labors of philosophy, you composed several sonnets on love, and on similar subjects. These you were often heard to sing, when the harmony of your voice gave new charms to the expression. In all circles nothing was talked of but Abeillard; even the most ignorant, who could not judge of composition, were enchanted by the melody of your voice. Female hearts were unable to resist the impression. Thus was my name soon carried to distant nations, for the loves of Heloisa and Abeillard were the constant theme of all your songs. What wonder, if I became the subject of general envy!

You possessed, besides, every endowment of mind and body. But alas! if my happiness then raised the envy of others, will they not now be compelled to pity me? And surely, even she, who was then my enemy, will now drop a tear at my sad reverse of fortune.

You know, Abeillard, I was the great cause of your misfortunes; but yet I was not guilty. It is the motive with which we act, and not the event of things that makes us criminal. Equity weighs the intention, and not the mere actions we may have done. — What, at all times, were my dispositions in your regard, you, who knew them, can only judge. To you I refer all my actions, and on your decision I rest my cause. I call no other witnesses.

But how has it happened, tell me, that, after my retreat from the world, which was your own work, I have been so forgotten or so neglected, that you never came either personally to recreate my solitude, or ever wrote to console me? If you can, account for this conduct; or I must tell you my own suspicions, which are also the general suspicions of the world. It was passion, Abeillard, and not friendship that drew you to me: it was not love, but a more base propensity. The incitements to pleasure removed, every other more gentle sentiment, to which they might seem to give life, has vanished with them.

This, my friend, is not so much mine, as the general conjecture: It is the common suspicion of all who know us. Would to God, it were I only who thought it; and that your own love could devise some excuse which might ease my pain! Were it in my power, even I would

willingly invent some pretext, which by seeming to lessen the pretensions I have to your notice, might extenuate your fault.

Do attend to my request, and, I think, you will find it moderate and easy to be complied with. I am not to have the happiness of your company; give me therefore what else you can. I ask but a few lines; and can you, who are so rich in words, refuse me that faint image of yourself? What reason have I to expect you will be more liberal in things of consequence, if even you show yourself niggardly in a few words? — Having, as I said, complied with all your injunctions, I thought, indeed, I had great pretensions to your esteem. Even at this moment I am a victim to your will. It was not religion that called me to the austerities of the cloister: I was then in the bloom of youth: but you ordered it, and I obeyed. For this sacrifice, if I have no merit in your eyes; vain indeed is all my labor! From God I can look for no reward, for whose sake, it is plain, I have as yet done nothing. When you had resolved to quit the world, I followed you, rather I ran before you. It seems you had the image of the patriarch's wife before your eyes: you feared I might look back, and therefore before you could surrender your own liberty, I was to be devoted. In that one instance, I confess, your mistrust of me tore my heart:

Abeillard, I blushed for you. For my part, Heaven knows! had I seen you hastening to perdition, at a single nod, I should not have hesitated to have preceded, or to have followed you. My soul was no longer in my own possession. It was in yours. Even now, if it is not with you, it is no where. It cannot exist without you. But do receive it kindly. There it will be happy, if it find you indulgent; if you only return kindness for kindness, trifles for things of moment, and a few words for all the deeds of my life. Were you less sure of my love, you would be more solicitous. But because my conduct has rendered you secure, you neglect me. Once more recollect what I have done for you, and how much you are indebted to me.

While together we enjoyed the pleasures which love affords, the motive of my attachment was to others uncertain. The event has proved, on what principles I started. To obey you, I sacrificed all my pleasures. I reserved nothing, the hope only excepted, that so I should become more perfectly your's. How unjust then is Abeillard, if, as my deserts increase, he make the less return! I ask but trifles, and trifles which require no labor to be complied with.

By that God then, to whom your life is consecrated, I conjure you, give me so much of yourself, as is at your disposal, that is, send me some lines of consolation. Do it with this design at



least, that, my mind being more at ease, I may serve God with more alacrity. When formerly the love of pleasure was your pursuit, how often did I hear from you? In your songs the name of Heloisa was made familiar to every tongue: it was heard in every street, the walls of every house repeated it. With how much greater propriety might you now call me to God, than you did then to pleasure. Weigh your obligations: think on my petition. — I have written you a long letter, but the conclusion shall be short. — My only friend, Farewel.

## LETTER II.

### ABEILLARD TO HELOISA.

**I**F since our conversion from the world to God, I have not written to console, or to admonish you, it was not the effect of indifference. Ascribe it to the high opinion, I have ever entertained of your wisdom and prudence. How could I think, that she stood in need of my assistance, to whom heaven had so largely distributed its best gifts? You were able, I knew, by example as by word, to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the pusillanimous, and to admonish the lukewarm.

When prioress of Argenteuil, these duties, I remember; you used long ago to practise: and

if now you give the same attention to your daughters, as you did then to your sisters, more is not requisite; and all that I could say would be of no value. But if, in your humility, you think otherwise, and that my instructions can avail you any thing; tell me only on what subjects you would have me write, and, as God shall direct me, I will endeavour to satisfy you.

I thank God that, exciting in your breasts an anxious solicitude for the constant and imminent dangers to which I am exposed, he has taught you to sympathize with my sufferings. Thus may I hope for the divine protection by your prayers, and soon see Satan bruised under my feet. It is with this view that I hasten to send you the form of prayer, you so earnestly requested, you, my sister, once dear to me in the world, but now most dear to me in Christ. By this means, you will offer to God a constant sacrifice of prayers, urging him to pardon our great and manifold sins, and to avert the hourly dangers which threaten me.

Many examples attest, how powerful before God and his saints are the prayers of the faithful; but chiefly of women for their friends, and of wives for their husbands. In this view the apostle admonishes us to pray without intermission. —  
*(He then goes on to prove this efficacy of prayer, from the holy scriptures, insisting particularly on the*

*examples of holy women: he tells her how much he confides in the prayers of the nuns of the Paraclet, and in her own, to which as her husband he claims a peculiar right. )*

But I will not insist on the supplications of your sisterhood, day and night devoted to the service of their maker; to you only I apply. I well know how powerful your intercession may be; and, in my present circumstances, I trust, it will be exerted. In your prayers then, ever remember him, who, in a particular manner, is your's. Urge your entreaties, for it is just you should be heard. An equitable judge cannot refuse it.

When formerly I was with you, you recollected, my dear Heloisa, how fervently you recommended me to the care of Providence. Often in the day a particular prayer was repeated for me.—Removed as I now am from the Paraclet, and involved in greater danger, how much more pressing are my wants! Now then convince me of the sincerity of your regard. I entreat, I implore you. —(*Then comes the prayer, to be said for himself, which I have elsewhere copied.*)

But if, by the permission of heaven, my enemies should so far prevail as to take away my life; or if, by any chance, I should be numbered with the dead; it is in my prayer that my body be conveyed to the Paraclet. There my daughters, or rather my sisters in Christ, turning their

eyes often to my tomb, will more strongly be excited to petition heaven for me. And, indeed, to a mind penetrated with grief, and stricken by the dark view of its crimes, where can be found a resting-place, at once so safe, and so full of hope, as that which, in a peculiar manner, is dedicated to, and bears the name of, the Paraclet, that is, the Comforter? Besides, I know, not where a Christian could find a better grave, than in the society of holy women, consecrated to God. They, as the Gospel tells us, attended the interment of their divine master, they embalmed his body with precious perfumes, they followed him to the monument, and there they watched in anxious solicitude. In return, they were consoled with the first angelic apparition, announcing his resurrection, and many subsequent favors were conferred upon them. To conclude, it is my most earnest request that the solicitude you now too strongly feel for the preservation of my life, you will then extend to the repose of my soul. Carry into my grave the same degree of love you showed me when alive, that is, never forget to petition heaven for me in your prayers.—Heloisa, live and farewell! — Farewell, my sisters: live, but let it be in Christ! — Remember Abeillard!



LETTER III.

HELOISA TO ABEILLARD.

**I** AM surpris'd, my dearest Abeillard, that, contrary to the usual style of epistolary correspondence, and even contrary to the obvious order of things, you would presume, in the very front of your salutation, to put my name before your own. It was preferring a woman to a man, a wife to her husband, a nun to a monk and a priest, and a deaconness to an abbot.—Decency and good order require that, when we write to our superiors or our equals, the names of those to whom we write, should have the first place. But in writing to inferiors, they are first mentioned who are first in dignity.

It was also to us a subject of much astonishment that, at the moment we expected consolation from you, then was our sorrow to be augmented. You should have dried our tears; but you rather chose to make them flow in larger streams. For which of us with dry eyes could read those concluding words of your letter: "But if, by the permission of heaven, my enemies should so far prevail as to take away my life?" &c. Oh, Abeillard! how could your mind suggest such ideas; how could your hand write them?

No, no; God cannot so far forsake his servants, as to perpetuate our lives, when you are gone. He will not give us that kind of existence, which is ten times worse than death. It belongs to you to celebrate our obsequies, and to commend our souls to God. It is you who assembled us here in his name: you must first dispose of us; then, no longer anxious on our account, and more secure of our salvation, you may follow us with more alacrity.

In future, do, Sir, be more guarded in your expressions. Already, alas! we are wretched enough. Why should you make us more so; why, before the hour, deprive us of that poor life we drag along with difficulty? Each day is sufficiently loaded with its own misery; and that last fatal one, covered with a robe of bitterness, will bring to each of us, an ample share of sorrow. "Why then, says Seneca, should we run in quest of evils, and die before our day?"

You request, should your death happen, while absent from us, that your body be conveyed to the Paraclet: For thus you think, with your image ever before us, to derive greater benefit from our prayers. Do you then imagine we can ever forget you? Or will that be a season for prayer, when general consternation shall have banished every tranquil thought: when reason will have lost its sway; and the tongue its utterance:

when the mind, in frantic rage, rebelling against its maker, will not seek to pacify him by supplications, but rather to provoke his anger by complaints? On that sad day our sole occupation will be to weep, but not to pray. We shall follow you: we shall run into the grave with you. How then are we to perform your last melancholy rites? With you having lost the support of our lives, what will remain for us but death? God grant that day may be our last!—If the sole mention of your death thus strikes us to the heart; what will not the reality do? It is our prayer to heaven, that we may not survive you; that we may never have to perform that office, which we expect from your hands.

Again let me entreat you to be more considerate for the sake of us all: at least, on my account, do refrain from all expressions which, like the shafts of death, penetrate my soul.—The mind, worn down by grief is a stranger to repose: plunged in troubles it is little able to think on God. To him you have devoted our lives; and will you impede his service? It were to be wished that every necessary event, which brings sorrow with it, might take place when least expected: for what cannot be avoided by human foresight, when permitted to torment us, only raises unavailing fears. Full of this thought the poet Lucan thus petitions heaven:

Sit fubitum quodcunque paras ; fit cæca futuri  
Mens hominum fati : liceat sperare timenti !

But if I lose you, what have I to hope for ! you are my only comfort ; deprived of that, shall I still drag on my miserable pilgrimage ? But even in you, what comfort have I, save only the thought, that you are still living ? All other joys are forbidden to me. I may not be allowed to see you, that my soul might sometimes, at least, return into its own bosom.

May I be permitted to say that heaven has never ceased to be my relentless persecutor ? If you call it clemency, where is cruelty to be found ? Fortune, that savage destiny, has spent against me every arrow of her rage. She has none left to throw at others. Her quiver was full, and she exhausted it on me. Mortals have no longer cause to dread her. Nor if there were a shaft left, would it find in Heloise a spot to light on. But, though bleeding at every pore, my enemy does not stay her persecuting hand. She suspends the last fatal stroke, and only fears lest my wounds prove mortal. Of all the wretched I am the most forlorn and wretched ! Preferred by you to the rest of my sex, I rose to the most exalted dignity. Thrown down from thence, my fate has been proportionably hard. He who falls from the greatest height, falls with the greatest



risk. Where was the woman of birth or power that fortune would have dared to compare with me? In the possession of you my glory was unrivalled; so is my disgrace in your privation. In prosperity and in adversity my life has known no measure. My happiness was unbounded; so is my affliction. Hanging over my melancholy state, I shed the more tears, when I view the magnitude of my losses; but my tears redouble, when recollection tells me, how dear those pleasures were which I have lost. To the greatest joys have succeeded the greatest sorrows.

And that my condition, it seems, might be absolutely desperate, even the common rules of equity have been perverted in our regard. For while we pursued illicit pleasures, divine justice was indulgent to us. No sooner was this reformed, and the holy bond of marriage united us, than the hand of God became heavy on us.

Having lowered yourself to raise me, and thus given dignity to me and all my family, what more could be required? All guilt was cancelled before God and man.—Why was I born to be the occasion of so black a perfidy! But such has ever been the baneful influence of women on the greatest men. Hence the caution of the wise man against us. (*Prov. 7. 24.*)

Eve, our first mother, drove her husband from paradise. Heaven gave her to be his helpmate, but

soon she became his destruction. — Delila was alone strong enough to vanquish that brave Nazarean, whose birth an angel had foretold. She delivered him to his enemies. When deprived of fight he was no longer able to support the load of misery, involved in one common ruin he expired with his enemies. — Salomon, the wisest of men, was so infatuated by a woman, the daughter of the king of Egypt, as even, in the decline of life, to become an idolater. In preference to his father, who was a just man, he had been chosen to build a temple to the Lord: that Lord he had publicly announced by word and in writing, and he had taught his worship; but that worship he deserted. — Job, that man of piety, had to endure the severest of all his conflicts from his wife. She instigated him to curse God. The arch-tempter well knew what experience had often taught him, that the most compendious way to destroy a husband, was to employ the artifice of his wife.

His usual malice he tried also upon us. He had failed in his attempt while our union was unlawful; therefore he had recourse to matrimony. He was not permitted, from our evil conduct, to work our ruin; but he drew it from a source which was holy.

One consolation I have, however, and I thank heaven for it; that, like the women I mentioned, I

had



had no share in the crime that was committed. An occasion of it, indeed, I was; but my mind did not co-operate. Yet, alas! though in this sense, unconscious of any guilt; do I know that my many antecedent sins were not the cause? Here I may be criminal. Long had I lived in the indulgence of my passions: and thereby I justly merited what I suffer. To such evil beginnings must be ascribed so disastrous an event. God grant me strength to do ample penance for the crimes that have been committed! May my sorrow, lengthened out to many days, bear some proportion to what you have suffered! It is but just, and to it I consign my life. Thus, should not heaven be pacified, to Abeillard at least I shall have made some atonement.

I will disclose to you all the secret weaknesses of my unhappy heart. Tell me then: can I hope to appease the divine anger; I, who, at every moment, am charging heaven with cruelty? My murmurs may draw on me greater vengeance: the sorrow, at least, of such a penitent will not avert it. But why do I talk of penitence? While the mind retains all its former attachments to sin; what avails the external language of grief? It is, indeed, easy to confess one's faults; it is easy to put on the imposing garb of penitence: but, Oh God! how hard it is to tear the mind from those affections, which were once so

dear! For this reason, when the holy Job had said; "I will loosen my tongue to speak against myself," that is, I will accuse myself of my faults, I will confess my sins; he immediately adds: "I will speak in the bitterness of my soul:" These words the blessed Gregory has expounded: "There are many, says he, who readily acknowledge their faults; but they know not what it is to grieve: what should be a subject of tears they relate with a face of joy." He therefore who, in real detestation, declares his sins, must do it in the bitterness of his heart: his compunction must at once punish what his tongue is made to utter.

How rare this penitential sorrow is, St. Ambrose has also told us: "I have found more, says he, who have preserved their innocence, than who have recovered it by penitence." — So fascinating were the pleasures we once indulged; the thought of them cannot give me pain, nor can I efface their impression. Wherever I turn my eyes, in all their charms, there are they present to me. Even in my dreams the dear phantoms hover round me.

During the celebration of the august mysteries, when the soul, on the wings of prayer, should rise more pure to heaven, the same importunate ideas haunt my wretched soul: they seize every avenue to my heart. When I should grieve



for what is past; I only sigh that the same pleasures return no more. My mind has been too faithful to its impressions: it holds up to the imagination every circumstance of pleasure, and all the scenes of past joys play wantonly before me.

I know, the strong workings of my mind, sometimes even betray themselves on my countenance. I am heard to utter words, which escape unthinkingly from me. — How wretched is my condition! To me surely may be applied those plaintive expressions of the apostle; “miserable mortal that I am, who will free me from this body of death?” Could I but add with truth; “the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

This grace, my dearest Abeillard, you are possessed of: it has been peculiarly indulgent to you. Even the very circumstance, which we consider as an instance of great severity, does but announce the paternal goodness of God, Like a skilful physician who, to cure his patient, does not spare the knife. — I have to combat the fervor of youth, and that burning flame which, the indulgence of pleasure, has raised within me. My arms are but that poor defence, which weak female nature can supply.

They, who cannot look into my soul, think me virtuous: they think me chaste, because my external actions are such; when surely this amiable virtue only dwells within the mind. The world

may praise me ; but before God I am worthless. He is the searcher of hearts , and his eye penetrates into the inmost thoughts. — I am deemed virtuous in an age , when religion too generally wears the cloak of hypocrisy ; when he is most loudly praised , whose actions do not shock the public eye. Indeed , the man , perhaps , may deserve some commendation , even before God , who , whatever be his motive , abstains from those practices , which are a scandal to the church , which expose the name of God to the blaspheming tongues of the wicked , and by which wordlings are induced to ridicule the sacred institutes of religion. This is , at least , a small effect of divine grace , from which proceeds not only the power to do good , but also that of abstaining from doing evil. Yet , after all , what avails the latter without the former ? It is written ; “ decline from evil , and do good.” And even both can have no pretension to a reward , unless they be done from the motive of pleasing God.

Through the whole course of my life , heaven knows what have been my dispositions ! It was you , and not God , whom I feared most to offend ; you , and not God , I was most anxious to please. My mind is still unaltered. It was not love of him , but solely your command , that drew me to the cloister. How miserable then my condition , if , undergoing so much , I have no prospect of a reward hereafter ! By external show , you , like

others, have been deceived; you ascribed to the impressions of religion what sprang from another source. Thus you recommend yourself to my prayers, in hopes of finding that succour, which I look for from you.

Do not, I pray, place that false confidence in me, which will make me lose the assistance I want. If you think me in health, you will apply no medicines; if in affluence, your hand will not be open to relieve me; and if strong, alas! I shall fall before you can run in to support me. Undeserved praise has been the ruin of many. It puts us off our guard at the moment caution is most necessary.

If you be an enemy to flattery, and a friend to truth, let me then entreat you to cease from praising me. If you think I possess any thing commendable, do not you, at least, raise the wind of vanity, which may dissipate it at a blast. Would he be thought an able physician, who, from external symptoms, should pretend to determine the nature of an internal complaint? Things which are common to the saint and the sinner have no merit in the sight of God. Such are all outward practices, to which the hypocrite more sedulously adheres, than the greatest saint.

The heart of man is depraved. It is impenetrable to human sight: who yet has fathomed it? And there are ways which seem to us straight, the ends

of which lead to death. Where God has reserved judgment to himself, it is rash in man to pronounce. For which reason the wise man says ; “ praise no one, whilst he lives : ” give not commendation at a time, when the very act of doing it, may make him undeserving of it.

To me your praises bring the greatest delight ; but therefore is their impression more dangerous. The anxious desire I have to please you gives them a thousand charms. Yet I would rather you should tremble for me, than show too much confidence. Fear will make you solicitous to assist me ; and in my present state, heaven knows what cause I have to tremble !

Do not tell me, in your exhortations to a virtuous life, that “ virtue is perfected in weakness,” and that “ he only shall be crowned, “ who had stoutly contended.” I look for no laurels, no crown of victory. It is enough for me to keep out of the way of danger. I like not the perils of war. If God will but give me the lowest place in heaven, I shall be amply satisfied. There, indeed, jealousy is not known, where each one is pleased with his allotment of happiness.

If these sentiments be not your's, I will confirm them by the authority of St. Jerom : “ I, “ says he, fairly confess my weakness : I do not wish to “ fight in hopes of victory, lest I be defeated.” How foolish is it to abandon what is certain, and run after an uncertainty which we may never find.—Farewel.



LETTER IV.

ABEILLARD TO HELOISA.

**T**HE complaints, you urge against me, in your last letter, may be reduced to four heads. — That in the salutation of my letter I put your name before my own — That, in lieu of administering comfort, I had added to your grief, by my expressions — That my praises are dangerous to you; while to oppose them you accuse yourself, and entreat me not to repeat them — And lastly, you subjoined your tiresome and never-ending murmurs against providence.

To these I will reply, not so much in my own defence, as for your instruction and advice. When you know that my requests are reasonable, you will be more disposed to comply with them; and when you find that I am not reprehensible in what regards myself, you will think me more just in your own concerns; and not again undervalue my admonitions.

I. — With regard to what you style the preposterous order of my address, a little attention will show you, that, in so doing, I conformed to your own idea. You say that, when we write to our superiors, their names should have the first place. You yourself are my superior, since you became the

spouse of Christ, as your favorite Jerom has shown in his letter to Eustochium.—(*The truth of this whimsical assertion he then attempts to show by a chain of mystical arguments, which the reader will find at length in the Latin original.*)

II.—And in reply to your second charge, that I afflicted you by mentioning the danger, to which I am exposed, and the death which I fear, recollect that, I did that also, in compliance with your most earnest request. I refer you to the words of your first letter; “For Christ’s sake,” &c. p. 235.

I acquainted you of my anxious cares, to which you had conjured me; and for that I am blamed. While my life is in danger, would it become you rather to rejoice? Or you would partake of my joys, but not of my sorrows.—Nothing so well distinguishes our true from our false friends, as that the former stand by us in adversity, and the latter are our companions only in prosperity.

Cease therefore, I pray you, from such expressions, and still these useless murmurs, which, indeed, have no affinity with the feelings of friendship. Or if this must not be; I at least may be permitted, surrounded as I am by perils, to be anxious for my own soul, and to provide, as far as may be, for its welfare.—And how, if you

really love me, can you object to this provident circumspection? Even, had you any confidence in the divine mercy towards me, in proportion as my sufferings appear heavy to you, it would be your wish to see me delivered from them. For you are well convinced that he would be my benefactor, who should put a period to my unhappy life. What then might be my fate, is uncertain; but I know my present evils.

The termination of misery is itself a happiness; and they who really feel for others, whatever their own loss may be in the event, cannot but desire to see an end to their labors. The kind mother who beholds her son languishing in pain, looks eagerly to its conclusion; she cannot support the sight, and she rather wishes his dissolution, than to have a partner in misery. The company of a friend is, indeed, pleasing: but I would sooner see him away, and happy, than have him with me, and miserable. His sufferings, which I cannot remedy, become intolerable to me.

But you, Heloisa, may not even enjoy my wretched company. Why then would you rather see me live in sorrow, than die and be happy? I do not understand your motives. If, from a continuance of my sufferings, you expect any advantage to yourself; you act the part rather of an enemy, than a friend. The idea, I know, shocks you, let me then hear no more of such complaints.

III. — Your rejection of praise I certainly applaud : thereby you show that you deserve it. It is written : “ he that humbles himself shall be “ exalted.” Your heart and hand, I trust, have gone together. If so, your humility is sincere : and my words will not injure it. But take care, I beg, lest in seeming to avoid praise, you seek it more, and your mind give the lie to your tongue. You know the sentiment of Jerom on this subject ; and give me leave to bring to your recollection the artful Galatea of Virgil. She ran from her lover, that he might follow her ; and before she hid herself, she wished to be seen :

*Et fugit ad falices, & se cupit ante videri.*

So we also sometimes strive to excite the greater admiration, by seeming to withdraw from it. We decline the regard of the world, and we draw it after us. It is an unbecoming artifice.

I speak of general characters. Of you I have no suspicion, nor do I doubt your sincerity. Still let me advise you to be more guarded in your language. They who know you less may perhaps think, you are but asking for greater praise. My commendations, believe me, will never make you vain ; but they may stimulate you to better exertions : and the more you desire to please me, the more ardently will you strive to execute my



injunctions. If I praise the excellency of your religious deportment, it is not that you should glory in it. And observe that, as the censure of an enemy is not to have much weight, so should not a friend's praise be too confidently relied on.

IV. — It remains that I examine more minutely what has long been the subject of your incessant complaints, I mean the circumstance, which drew us from the world. Here you accuse the ways of providence, when it would be more equitable to extol them. I had thought, indeed, that long ago, by the peculiar grace of heaven, this bitterness had been erased from your mind. The more dangerous it is, at once threatening the ruin of your soul and body, the more it calls for pity, and the more it gives me pain. You declare that, your only wish is to please me: quit then these baneful thoughts, that you may torment me no longer that you may make me happy. With them you cannot please me; nor with them can you expect to go along with me to happiness hereafter. You have professed a willingness to follow me even to the gates of misery, and will you let me go without you to those of endless joy? Let this, at least, be a motive which may urge you to a religious life. Reflect on the happiness which awaits you there, and on my society, which will no more be taken from you; for you do not hesitate to declare that I am in the right way.

Recollect what you once said ; call to mind the words of your last letter , that , in the manner of our conversion , and in the mode of God's chastisement , heaven had been rather propitious to me. Yes, *Heloïsa* , it was propitious to us both ; but the excess of your grief does not admit the language of reason. Lament not that you were the cause of this event ; rather be persuaded you were born to be it. I suffered ; but it was advantageous to me : do the sufferings of the martyrs also give you pain ? Had I justly suffered , could you have borne it more patiently ? If so , ignominy would have fallen upon me , and my enemies might have gloried : they would have been just ; and I contemptible. Their behaviour would have found no accusers ; and who would have pitied me ?

To assuage the bitterness of your grief , I could show that all has happened justly , and with a view to our greater good. The ways of Providence are equitable. Revolve in your thoughts the intemperance of our behaviour , even after marriage , when you were at *Argenteuil* , and I sometimes came to visit you. Need I mention our many antecedent excesses ? And how basely had I deceived your uncle , when I lived with him in habits of unbounded confidence ? Surely his vengeance was not unmerited. — In punishment of these crimes it was that I have suffered ; and

to the same cause I ascribe the many evils which, at this hour, surround me. It will be well if divine justice may thus be satisfied.

Call to your recollection another circumstance. When I took you from Paris into Britany, to avoid shame and the fury of your uncle, you disguised yourself in the dress of a nun; and thus irreverently profaned the holy institute, which you now profess. With what propriety then has the divine justice, rather the divine goodness, compelled you to embrace a state, which you could wantonly ridicule, willing that, in the very habit of a nun, you should expiate the crime committed against it. The truth of reality supplies itself a cure, and corrects your dissimulation.

If we view the advantages also which this justice has produced, you will rather be disposed to admire the kindness of heaven towards us. My dearest Heloisa, do consider, from what perils we were drawn, even when we resisted most the calls of mercy. We were exposed to the most dangerous tempests, and God delivered us. Ever repeat, and with a grateful mind, the wonders of his mercy. The worst sinners may take a lesson from our example; for what may not suppliants expect, when they hear of the favors which were done to us? — Compare together the magnitude of our dangers, and the ease of our deliverance; our inveterate disorders, and the gentle remedy;

our unworthy conduct, and the benevolence of heaven. — I will then proclaim what the Lord has done for me.

And do you also be my inseparable associate in this grateful thanksgiving: you were my partner in guilt, and you shared the favor of heaven. Heaven has been particularly mindful of you; even, by the happy presage of your name, it marked you for its own; for Heloise is derived from the sacred name of Heloim.

In the admirable order of providence, by the very means the devil aimed to destroy us, was our salvation effected. We were then just united by the indissoluble bond of marriage. It was my wish never to be separated from you; and, at that moment, God projected to draw us both to himself. — Had you been tied by no engagement, when I left the world, the persuasion of friends, or the love of pleasure, might easily have detained you in it. — It seemed, by this care of heaven, as if we had been designed for some important purpose; as if it were unbecoming, that the literary talents, we both possessed, should be employed in other business, than in celebrating the praises of our maker. Perhaps it was feared that the allurements of a woman might pervert my heart. It was the fate of Salomon.

How many are the blessings with which your



labors are now daily crowned! Your spiritual children are numerous; while I, alas! can number none, and am here in vain, at St. Gildas, preaching to these sons of perdition. And would not, think you, the loss have been deplorable, if, immersed in the ignoble pleasures of the world, in lieu of the splendid offspring you now rear for heaven, you had been, with pain, the mother only of a few earthly children? Then would you have been a mere woman; and now you surpass us all, and now you change the curse of Eve into the blessing of Mary. Those hands which, in holy occupation, now turn over the sacred volumes, had been unbecomingly engaged in the mean offices of domestic life!—From such unseemly occupations we have been graciously called, even by a holy violence, as was the great apostle. It has been meant, perhaps, for an example, from which other learned persons may take warning, and not presume on their own strength.

Be not therefore afflicted, Heloisa, nor repine at this paternal chastisement. “God corrects  
“whom he loves.” Our sufferings are momentary; they are to purify, and not destroy us. Listen to the prophet, and be comforted. “God will  
“not judge, nor will he twice punish the same  
“crime,” says he. Attend to the important advice, which truth itself has given to us: “In

“patience you shall possess your souls.” So says Salomon: “The patient man is better than the warrior, and he that is master of his own mind than the conqueror of cities.”

Are you not moved to compunction and to tears, when you behold the innocent son of God, suffering such various torments for you and for us all? Him have ever before your eyes; carry him in your thoughts. View him going out to Calvary, and bearing the heavy weight of his cross. Join the company of the people, and of the holy women, who lamented and wailed round him.— Learn to sympathize with his sufferings; be early at his monument, and strew perfumes on his grave. But remember, they be spiritual odors; and with your tears bedew them.

When they who love their prince, see his first and only son expiring before them, how excessive is their lamentation! The royal family and the whole court are dissolved in tears. But it is the young queen, the spouse of the deceased, whose sighs are most afflicting, and whose cries are loudest.— These your grief must emulate. You are the consort of the lamb. He purchased you for himself, and he redeemed you. His right to you then is indisputable; and see, how dear you must be to him.— What could he, who needs no one, behold in you, that should force him to undergo so much for your sake? His love was disinterested;

it fought for nothing but yourself, and for you he was disposed to die. This is the test of charity. He was your true friend, and not I, Heloisa. My love, which involved us both in crimes, did not deserve the name. The gratification of my passions was all I looked for. I suffered, you say, for you; and so it may be: but rather it was on your account only that I suffered, and that reluctantly. In that there was no love. Nor was it to do you good so much, as to add to your grief and to oppress you more. But he, your Saviour, voluntarily suffered for you; he suffered to heal your maladies, and to do away your pains. To him then, and not to me, be directed all your tenderness, all your tears, and all your sympathy. Grieve that so great cruelty was practised on innocence; and not that a just vengeance fell on me, when even this vengeance rather was a favor from heaven.

If equity offends you, you are unjust, Heloisa: and if knowingly you resist the will and the kindness of providence, your sin is greater. Bewail your redeemer, not your seducer; him who died for you, not your servant who, freed from death, just now begins to live.

To the events, which have mercifully befallen us both, learn then to submit with patience. It was the hand of a father which struck, not to destroy, but to correct us. His severest blow gave

life to my soul. He might justly have overwhelmed me, when to save me from eternal punishment, he inflicted momentary pain. You and I had both been guilty; and he was satisfied that one should suffer. — It is true, you had deserved less, for by nature you were more infirm, and your virtue was more constant. In equity did God weigh these circumstances: and I thank him from my heart, that he laid no punishment on you, and yet reserved for you the palm of victory. Me, indeed, he chastised, and filled the tempest of my passions; but you he destined to nobler contests, and to the rewards of those who conquer. This I know you do not hear with pleasure, and you forbade me to repeat it: but it is not therefore less the language of truth. He who has an enemy to oppose, has ever victory to look to; for he only, says the apostle, shall be crowned who has contended stoutly.

For me remain no laurels; but it is some consolation, that I have less to withstand here, and that I may have escaped, perhaps, eternal punishment hereafter. — If I complain that my source of merit is diminished; I am pleased that your's should be augmented. We are one in Christ, and one by the bond of marriage. What you can call your own, to me may not be indifferent. I have said, I am now your servant, whom once you called your master: but it is charity



rather which unites me to you, than any fear that rules me. My confidence then in your patronage is great; your prayers will effect what mine cannot. At this time particularly when imminent dangers, and a thousand cares distract my thoughts, and allow no time for prayer. Nor have I more leisure to read the word of God, and to ponder its sacred truths, in imitation of the *Æthiopian eunuch*, of whom we read that an apostle was sent by heaven to instruct him. He had the holy Scriptures in his hand, and he read as he journeyed homeward.

That no impediment may lie in the way of my request, and that it may be delayed no longer, I have composed, and I here send you a prayer, which, with hands raised to heaven, you will daily repeat for us both.

The P R A Y E R.

“ O GOD, who, in the beginning of all  
 “ things, having drawn woman from the side of  
 “ man, didst institute the great sacrament of  
 “ marriage, and by thy own birth, and thy first  
 “ miracle, didst then raise it to higher honors,  
 “ of the grace of which sacrament I once, in  
 “ thy goodness, was allowed to partake; reject  
 “ not, oh reject not, the prayers of thy humble  
 “ handmaid, which, here prostrate in the presence

“ of thy majesty, I pour out for my own sins,  
“ and for the sins of my dear Abeillard. Pardon,  
“ thou kindest being, thou, who art goodness  
“ itself, pardon our manifold crimes, may our  
“ numberless faults experience the greatness of  
“ thy mercies! I beseech thee, now punish us,  
“ for we are guilty, and spare us hereafter. Use  
“ against thy servants the rod of correction, but  
“ not the sword of thy wrath. Chastise our bodies,  
“ but show pity to our souls. Purify them, but  
“ not in thy anger. Be merciful, rather than be  
“ just. As a father correcteth his children, so do  
“ thou chasten us, and not as an austere master.—  
“ Try us, O Lord, as the prophet requests, and  
“ measure our strength; then lay thy burdens  
“ on us. By the blessed Paul thou hast promised,  
“ that man shall not be tempted beyond his  
“ strength. — When it pleased thee, and as it  
“ pleased thee, so didst thou join us, O Lord,  
“ and so didst thou put us asunder. The work  
“ thou didst begin in mercy, do thou in mercy  
“ perfect. Whom thou didst once separate here,  
“ unite for ever to thyself in heaven. Thou art  
“ our hope, our portion, our expectation,  
“ our comfort. O Lord, blessed be thy name  
for ever ! ”

Farewel in Christ, and live to him ! — Amen.

LETTER V.

HELOISA TO ABEILLARD.

THAT you may not have cause to charge me with disobedience, as you ordered, so have I checked the language of immoderate grief. When I write to you, my expressions shall be more temperate: but on other occasions, I cannot promise to refrain my tongue.—Nothing is less in our power than our own minds; and we are oftener forced to obey than, we can command, their operations. The sudden impulse of strong affections cannot be at once repressed; their effects are visible, and they more easily announce themselves in words, which are their readiest vehicle. “From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.” But I will keep my pen in subjection, even when my tongue shall be ungovernable. It would be well, indeed, if my mind were as subservient!

To restore me to serenity is not, I fear, in your power; but you can moderate my sorrow. One thought is banished by another. The chain of gloomy meditation is broken, when new objects engage the attention; and the more honorable, or expedient, or interesting these may appear,

the more intense will be their impression, and the more will the mind turn aside from trouble.

We request then that you will enter on the discussion of two points, the knowledge of which will be very useful to us. Tell us the origin of the female monastic institute; and then give us a rule, adapted to our sex, and which may comprise all the duties of our state. For want of this, men and women are now subject to the same rule; the same burden is laid on all. This is the rule of St. Bennet, practised through the Western church. View only its several injunctions, as to the dress, for instance of the religious, and the distinct duties of the abbot; and tell me how any part of them can be applied to nuns, or to their superior? Are we to show no hospitality to the other sex; or when they come, must the abbess, as the general rule requires, give them entertainment at her table? Great is the danger in this promiscuous society, and particularly at meals where excess is often committed, and wine begins to loosen the passions of the soul.

Of this the holy Jerom was sensible. Writing to a Roman lady and her daughter, he says; "In banquets innocence is not easily preserved." — And Ovid, that master of foul obscenity, has been careful to point out the many occasions



which the table supplies for criminal indulgence.  
He says;

Vinaque cum bibulas sparsere Cupidinis alas ,  
Permanet , et capto stat gravis illa loco :  
Tum veniunt risus ; tum pauper cornua fumit ;  
Tum dolor et curæ , rugaque frontis abit.  
Illic sæpe animos juvenum rapuere puellæ :  
Et Venus in venis , ignis in igne fuit.

De Art. Am. l. 1.

And if women only be admitted to our table , will there then , think you , be no danger ? Truly , if the business of seduction is to be carried on , I know nothing so efficacious as female art. To our own sex it is that we chuse to reveal the corrupt maxims of our hearts. The same experienced Jerom always advised his fair pupils to avoid with caution the society of women of the world. — In a word , if we only admit women , we shall irritate the men , of whose assistance our convents particularly stand in need. Is it just , besides , that no return should be made to those who are our greatest benefactors ?

Seeing then that the whole compass of our rule cannot be complied with , have we not reason to fear the censure of St. James , that , “ He who “ violates the law in one article , transgresses “ against the whole ? ” I find no exception in the rule of greater or less obligations.

But passing over those particulars, with which we cannot comply, or not without danger: who ever beheld a convent of nuns employed in the harvest, or in the general business of farming? Can it be expected that a whole year should be spent in our noviciates; or that three expositions of the rule may suffice? What, in short, can be more foolish than to enter on a road, dark and hitherto unexplored? Need I mention the presumption there is, in chusing and daring to profess a life, of which we know nothing, and in making vows which evidently cannot be fulfilled? Prudence is the mother of all virtues, and reason must guide our best actions. Indeed, where they are wanting, what practice can be called good or virtuous? Even virtues which run into excess, may more properly, as Jerom observes, be entered on the list of vices. And can there be a more absurd attempt than to impose burdens, before the shoulders have been tried which are to bear them? Human exertions can not exceed the strength of nature. Who would take the ponderous load from an elephant, and lay it on the back of an ass? Can children or old men do the work of vigorous age? All must be in just proportion. Expect not then from us the exertions of manhood, or achievements which may become the strength of your arms. The holy Gregory's admonitions are apposite to these maxims.

As in framing the monkish rules no mention is made of women, and even statutes are introduced wholly unadapted to their characters, it is plain that they were not meant for us. Nature must be forced. Of this, Bennet our holy father, in whose breast every virtue was seen to dwell, was so sensible, that he would adapt his rule, as far as might be, to the constitutions of men, and the variation of seasons. Let all things, says he, be done in measure. He begins by the abbot, and ordains that in governing his monks, he pay due attention to their respective dispositions and talents; that he always bear his own infirmities before his eyes: and that he be careful not to crush the tender reed. "If I force my flock, said Jacob, to advance too far, they will all die in one day." Prudence then must be used, that the stout be seasonably employed, and the weak be not disheartened.

Agreeably to these wise maxims, Bennet shows indulgence to the young, to the old, and to those of delicate habits. He considers the particular duties which the rule may impose; and he wishes to proportion the quality and quantity of food to the constitutions of his subjects. — Even the times of fasting he has so regulated, that they shall not fall at improper seasons, or on those who have much work to do.

How then, think you, would this wise man have acted, had he undertaken also to give laws to women? He that in his own sex could consider the many incidents of human weakness, would have well known how to measure ours. Do you, Abeillard, take a lesson from his example, and fancy not that one rule will apply likewise to us, or that we can bear your burdens. — For us, I think, it will be enough, if in our virtues we shall be able to rival the bishops of God's church, and her clergy. Nor truly would it be contemptible to come up to the perfection of the good laity. What in you men of stout virtue hardly deserves notice, in us may be called admirable.

The learned Chrysostom knew how to value the virtue of the lay-christian. He advises all to follow the lesson of the Apostle, to *watch* and *pray*, and to *mortify* the flesh.—This advice was not given to monks only. Indeed, what are the indulgences to which the laity may pretend? They may marry: besides that, we have all the same obligations. Our divine master made no distinction. Hard truly would be the condition of mankind, if the same rewards were not promised to all; or if matrimony were supposed to be a bar to virtue here, and to happiness hereafter,



If to the gospel-precepts then we superadd the virtue of continence, we shall have done our duty. Would to God, we were only able, by our best exertions, to fulfil those precepts; that we did not aspire to be more than christians! — If I am not mistaken, it was from an idea that new laws were ill-adapted to our natures, and that we could not bear the imposition of extraordinary vows, that the holy fathers would not enact any particular statutes for our sex. They adhered to the maxims of the apostle, that “where there is no law, there is less prevarication.”

Conscious of our weakness, the same Paul, though the professed admirer of continence, urges young widows to marry, to become the mothers of children, and the mistresses of families. The blessed Jerom approved the advice: “It would be better, says he, to marry, and “to walk the beaten road, than to aim at great “things, and fall headlong into ruin.” — St. Austin was an enemy to rash engagements: “She “that is free, he says, let her seriously reflect; “and to her that is bound I recommend perseverance.” — The ancient canons of discipline forbade women to tie themselves by vows before the age of forty, and even that after a rigorous trial; whereas you may enter into holy orders at the age of twenty. The reason of this distinction is obvious.

There is now, I understand, an order of religious men, who are called the canons of St. Austin. These do not esteem themselves inferior to the monks; yet they wear linen, and eat flesh-meat. Suppose we were to copy their example?—As to food; consult but the book of nature, and it will tell you that, in that line, we should have few restraints. Sobriety in our sex is a virtue of constitution. The expense of our table is small, and a slender diet suffices. I have also learned from philosophy that we are not so easily intoxicated. — Macrobius observes from Aristotle: “ Women, says he, are seldom  
 “ intoxicated; old men often. A woman’s body  
 “ is particularly moist. The smoothness and  
 “ brightness of the skin show it. The wine which  
 “ they drink falling upon a large body of  
 “ humors, loses its efficacy; it is weakened,  
 “ and has not strength to rise up to the brain.”

In another place: “ The body of a woman is  
 “ made like a sieve: it is full of pores, for  
 “ the business of copious perspiration. By the  
 “ same apertures all liquor soon escapes. On the  
 “ contrary, old men are dry, which the rough-  
 “ ness of their skin demonstrates.”

Be persuaded, Abeillard, from these considerations, that we may be indulged in the free use of meat and drink. There is no danger of excess. If we

live continently, renounce our property, and serve the Lord, enough will be done, and we shall deserve praise for it. In other things, let us imitate the clergy, or the devout laity, or, if you will, the canons I have mentioned, who profess to follow the maxims of the apostolic age. — It is prudent in those, who consecrate themselves to God, to vow little, that they may have it in their power freely to do more.

If many, at this day, who rashly engage in a monastic life, would attend to this; if they would duly weigh the important obligations of the state, and see what their rule requires, they would transgress less through ignorance, and less through neglect. But crowding indiscreetly into the cloisters, they there live as they entered; they despise a rule which they embraced heedlessly, and in its stead follow light and abusive customs. It will become us to take care not presumptuously to engage in difficulties, under which we see so many of you sink. The world is grown old, and with it the human race has lost its pristine vigor. At least the charity of all is fallen from its fervor. Laws then, which were made for man, must conform to the change, and be modelled to it.

I have mentioned the blessed Bennet: he so framed his rule, he says, as to make it rather an

introduction to a devout life. And indeed, compared with some precedent institutes, and with the practices of the holy fathers, his injunctions, it must be owned, are easy.

What so contrary to religion and the tranquil repose of the cloister as wine? It foment the passions, it breeds dissensions, and it even can overpower in man that superior reason, by which he excels the other beings of the creation, and approaches to the nature of his maker. Wine it is which the scriptures so much condemn as dangerous, and warn us against its use. You know what is said in the book of Proverbs; and Jerom, in his letter to Nepotian, on the duties of churchmen, is as severe against that pernicious liquor, and all others which can cause ebriety.

Yet does Bennet, that spiritual man, in consideration of the imperfect character of the times, allow wine to his monks. "I could not persuade them, says he, to abstain from its use." He had read, I presume, of the great moderation of the holy fathers in the deserts. It is related that, on a time, a solemn service was celebrated on the mountain of abbot Anthony. Some wine was brought, out of which an old man filled a small cup, and took it to abbot Sisoï, who was sick. The good abbot drank of it once, and a second time. But when the



old man presented it a third time, he refused it: "No, said he, brother; that's enough: "don't you know that the devil is at the bottom."—There are many more such anecdotes.

As to flesh-meat: where do we find that it was ever condemned by God, or prohibited by him to monks? Bennet, who was so indulgent on a more dangerous article, may well be copied here.—I wish to see a rational scheme adopted. In things that are indifferent, use no restraint. Why require duties which will not be complied with? Forbid sin, and with that rest satisfied. In food and raiment let the maxim be, to provide what is most cheap and common; to take what is necessary, and retrench the rest.

Truly, those things are of little value, which neither prepare us for the kingdom of God, nor at all recommend us to his mercy. Such are all external practices, which are common to the reprobate and the faint, to the hypocrite and the sincere christian. It was the distinction of external and internal works which made so wide a difference between the christian and the jew. The apostle determines charity to be the fulfilling and the end of the law; and it is by this virtue alone that the sons of God are known from the sons of the devil. He even utterly annuls the value of such works to enhance the merit of faith and internal rectitude.

Read his address to the Jews in the epistle to the Romans.—He permitted the use of all meats; it was only the danger of scandal which he advised to be avoided.—His writings every where inculcate these maxims.

And did not our Saviour himself, when he sent out his disciples to preach, use the same indulgence? If ever, caution was then peculiarly necessary: yet he told them to eat and drink whatever the hospitable kindness of their friends should set before them. It is true, Paul foresaw that the time would come, when men would depart from this discipline of his master and of himself. Thus he writes to Timothy: —“ The  
“ spirit saith plainly that, in the latter times,  
“ some shall depart from the faith, giving  
“ ear to the spirits of error, and to the doctrines  
“ of devils; forbidding to marry, commanding  
“ to abstain from meats, which God created to  
“ be received with thanksgiving by them who  
“ believe, and who know the truth. For  
“ every creature of God is good, and nothing  
“ is to be rejected, which is taken with thanks-  
“ giving. ”

If external appearances be regarded, John and his disciples, with their wonderful abstinence and macerations, may be preferred to Christ and his apostles. They themselves seemed conscious of a superiority, when murmuring they said

said; "Why do we and the Pharisees fast so much, while thy disciples do not fast?"— St. Austin is full upon this matter; and reflecting how much the reality exceeded the semblance of virtue, he boldly pronounces that external actions superadd nothing to the merit of our internal dispositions. I refer you to his writings.

Virtue alone is pleasing in the sight of God. They who equally possess it, will from his hands receive the same reward, though their actions may widely vary. It will be the employment then of the true christian to attend to his heart; there to plant the seeds of virtue, and from it to eradicate vice. What may be the show of his actions, he will be little solicitous.— We read that the apostles, even in the company of their master, were so rustic and ill-bred that, regardless of common decorum, as they passed through the corn-fields, they plucked the ears, and ate them, like children. Nor did they wash their hands before they sat down to table. "To eat with unwashed hands," said our Saviour to those who were offended, "doth not defile a man." And he instantly added what those things were which bring defilement with them; "Evil thoughts, homicides, adulteries," &c. "these come from the heart, and they defile a man." If the mind be not previously corrupted, that is, if the will be

not vicious, no actions can be bad. That is the source of evil.

If we be studious to please him, who is the searcher of hearts, and who reads our secrets, it is the motive of our actions that we shall be careful to regulate. The widow's mite was more acceptable than all the splendid offerings of the rich. He, who does not need our services, regards the intention and not the gift. "The Lord looked kindly on Abel and his offerings:" he saw the disposition with which he came, and he was well pleased. The disposition is more grateful to heaven, when the action which accompanies it engages less of our attention.

Let us then determine to learn christian prudence, and to imitate rather Jacob, who entertained his father with a dish of homely food, while Esau was beating the woods in quest of rarities. I love not Pharisaical maxims. David says: "The vows I make to thee, O Lord, are within my heart, from thence I will praise thee." And does not the poet Persius say; "*Ne te quæsieris extra*:"—Look not for thyself from home?

It would be endless to quote the opinions of all those authors, profane and sacred, who show us the significance of outward performances. The contrary doctrine would tend to bring back Judaism; to substitute the works of the law, and its intolerable



slavery, for the liberty of the gospel, and to the sweet yoke of Christ, and his light burden. Yet our Saviour himself called us to this new profession. We know what, in "the Acts of the Apostles," was said to those unwise christians, who wished to retain the practices of the law.

Do you then, Abeillard, follow Christ in his indulgent maxims; imitate that apostle, whose name you bear, proportioning your precepts to the weakness of our nature. Allow us ample time to celebrate the praises of our maker. This is the sacrifice which is most pleasing to him. He rejected the flesh of bulls and the blood of goats; but the offering of praise he accepted, and he listened to the vows of the heart.

Conclude not, however, that it is my wish to discard all manual labor, even when it may seem necessary. My meaning is, that things which regard the body, and which stand in the way of spiritual duties, should not be held in much estimation. This I can the more insist on, because in the apostolic age it was allowed, that widows and devout women should be maintained at the public cost. They truly may be denominated widows, not only who have lost their husbands, but who have renounced the world. These it is but equitable the church should support. Our Saviour before his death appointed a steward for his mother: and seven deacons were afterwards

chosen to attend to those good women, who were particularly consecrated to God.

Paul, it is true, writing to the Theſſalonians, very ſeverely blamed ſome who led a liſtleſs and idle life; he ordered that he who would not work might ſtarve. Our holy Bennet likewiſe, that idleneſs might be avoided, enjoined manual labor. But tell me; was Mary idle, when, ſitting at the feet of Chriſt, ſhe liſtened to his words? Martha, in the mean time, worked for both, and envious of her ſiſter's repoſe ſhe murmured, as if ſhe only had to bear the heavy burden of the day.

The ſame murmuring is now often heard. It comes from thoſe who, engaged in the buſineſs of the world, are yet required to ſupport the miniſters of the altar. They complain leſs of the extortions of a tyrant, than of what they contribute to maintain thoſe, whom they pleaſe to call lazy and uſeleſs drones. Yet they know that their occupation is, not to hear only the words of Chriſt, but to meditate on them, and to ſing the praiſes of his name. Is it much to ſupply a few earthly goods for the many ſpiritual advantages given in return? And the ſlaves of the world ſhall deem it diſhonorable to ſerve the children of heaven! Under the old law, the liberty of repoſe was ſanctioned to the tribe of Levi. They



enjoyed no landed property, that nothing might with-hold them from their functions; and they were supported by the labor and contributions of their brethren.

Should you resolve, on the article of fasting, to add any thing to the general discipline of the church; I beg you will weigh it maturely, and consider how far it may be proper for us. In my opinion, the great christian fast is rather to abstain from sin. — In the distribution of our church-service, and in the arrangement of our prayers, be likewise as indulgent as you can. Oblige us not often to repeat the same psalms. Bennet, our founder, was so little opinionated, as to permit his successors, on this head, to make any changes they might chuse. In process of time, as the splendor of the church should increase, he knew that alterations might be expedient. — Above all things, we wish you so to settle our night-service, that no priest or deacon be admitted amongst us at that unseasonable hour. It becomes us, at all times, to be secluded from the sight and approach of your sex. Our business is with heaven; and let us be on our guard against every danger.

It is now, Sir, your duty, while God gives you life, to make such regulations for us, as may be binding on the Paraclet for ever. You, under him, are the founder of this house: be

also, with him, our legislator. When you are gone, we may have a teacher who will be disposed to build on an other foundation. For us, we fear, he may be less solicitous; or we may be less attentive to him. Should he be willing to serve us, as you are; are we sure he will be equally capable? Do you speak to us, and we will hear. — Farewel.

*Abeillard's reply to this letter is itself a volume; I therefore cannot insert it, nor would it be read if I were. It is dry and as uninteresting, as it is prolix.*



# EPISTOLA I.

## HELOISÆ ABÆLARDO.

*Domino suo, imo Patri; Conjugi suo, imo Fratri;  
Ancilla sua, imo Filia; ipsius Uxor, imo Soror:  
Abælardo Heloïsa.*

**M**ISSAM ad Amicum pro consolatione Epistolam, dilectissime, vestram ad me forte quidam nuper attulit. Quam ex ipsa statim tituli fronte vestram esse considerans, tanto ardentius eam cœpi legere, quanto Scriptorem ipsum charius amplector: ut cujus rem perdididi, verbis saltem, tanquam ejus quadam imagine recreer. Erant, memini, hujus Epistolæ fere omnia felle & absinthio plena, quæ scilicet nostræ conversationis miserabilem historiam, & tuas, unice, cruces assiduas referebant.

Complesti re vera in Epistola illa, quod in exordio ejus Amico promissisti, ut videlicet in comparatione tuarum suas molestias nullas vel parvas reputares. Ubi quidem expositis prius magistrorum tuorum in te persecutionibus, deinde in corpus tuum summæ proditiōis injuria, ad condispulorum quoque tuorum Alberici videlicet Remensis, & Lotulfi Lombardi execrabilem invidiam, & infestationem nimiam stilum contulisti. — Quorum quidem suggestionibus quid de glorioso illo Theologiæ tuæ opere, quid de te ipso quasi in carcere damnato actum sit, non prætermisisti. Inde ad Abbatis tui fratrumque falsorum machinationem accessisti, & detractiones illas, tibi gravissimas, duorum illorum Pseudo-apostolorum à prædictis æmulis in te commotas, atque ad scandalum plerisque subortum de nomine Paracleti Oratorio præter

consuetudinem imposito: denique ad intolerabiles illas & adhuc continuas vitæ persecutiones, crudelissimi scilicet illius exactoris, & pessimorum, quos filios nominas, Monachorum profectus, miserabilem Historiam consummasti.

Quæ cum ficcis oculis neminem vel legere vel audire posse æstimem: tanto dolores meos amplius renovarunt quanto diligentius singula exprefferunt, & eo magis auxerunt, quo in te adhuc pericula crescere retulisti; ut omnes pariter de vita tua desperare cogamur, & quotidie ultimos illos de nece tua rumores trepidantia nostra corda, & palpitantia pectora expectent.

Per ipsum itaque, qui te sibi adhuc quoquomodo protegit, Christum obsecramus; quatenus ancillulas ipsius & tuis crebris literis de his, in quibus adhuc fluctuas, naufragiis certificare digneris; ut nos saltem quæ tibi solæ remansimus, doloris vel gaudii participes habeas. Solent etenim dolenti nonnullam afferre consolationem, qui condolent, & quodlibet onus pluribus impositum levius sustinetur, siue defertur. Quod si paululum hæc tempestas quieverit, tanto amplius maturandæ sunt literæ, quanto sunt jucundiores futuræ. De quibuscumque autem nobis scribas, non parvum nobis remedium conferes; hoc saltem uno, quod te nostri memorem esse monstrabis.

Quam jucundæ vero sint absentium Literæ amicorum, ipse nos exemplo proprio Seneca docet, ad amicum Lucilium quodam loco sic scribens: „ Quod  
 „ frequenter mihi scribis, gratias ago. Nam quo uno  
 „ modo potes, te mihi ostendis. Nunquam epistolam  
 „ tuam accipio, quin protinus una simus.” Si imagines nobis amicorum absentium jucundæ sunt, quæ

memoriam renovant, & desiderium absentiae falso atq; inani solatio levant: quanto jucundiores sunt literæ, quæ amici absentis veras notas afferunt?— Deo autem gratias, quod hoc saltem modo præsentiam tuam nobis reddere nulla invidia prohiberis, nulla difficultate præpediris: nulla (obsecro) negligentia retarderis.

Scripsisti ad amicum prolixæ consolationem Epistolæ & pro adversitatibus quidem suis, sed de tuis. Quas videlicet tuas diligenter commemorans, cum ejus studes consolationi, nostræ plurimum addidisti desolationi, & dum ejus mederi vulneribus cuperes, nova quædam nobis vulnera doloris inflixisti, & priora auxisti. Sana, obsecro, ipse quæ fecisti, qui quæ alii fecerunt, curare satagis. Morem quidem amico & socio gessisti, & tam amicitiae quam societatis debitum persolvisti: sed majori te debito nobis adstrinxisti, quas non tam amicas, quam amicissimas, non tam socias quam filias convenit nominari: vel si quod dulcius & sanctius vocabulum potest excogitari.

Quanto autem debito te erga eas obligaveris, non argumentis, non testimoniis indiget, ut quasi dubium comprobetur: & si omnes taceant, res ipsa clamat. Hujus quippe loci tu, post Deum, solus es fundator, solus hujus Oratorii constructor, solus hujus Congregationis ædificator. Nihil hic super alienum ædificasti fundamentum. Totum quod hic est, tua creatio est. Solitudo hæc feris tantum, sive latronibus vacans, nullam hominum habitationem noverat, nullam domum habuerat. In ipsis cubilibus ferarum, in ipsis latibulis latronum, ubi nec nominari Deus solet, divinum erexisti tabernaculum, & Spiritui

Sancto proprium dedicasti templum. Nihil ad hoc ædificandum ex Regum vel Principum opibus intulisti, cum plurima posses & maxima, ut quicquid fieret, tibi soli posset adscribi. Clerici sive Scholares huc certatim ad disciplinam tuam confluentes omnia ministrabant necessaria; & qui de beneficiis vivebant Ecclesiasticis, nec oblationes facere noverant, sed suscipere, & qui manus ad suscipiendum, non at dandum, habuerant, hic in oblationibus faciendis prodigi atque importuni fiebant.

Tua itaque, vere tua hæc est proprie in sancto proposito novella plantatio, cujus adhuc teneris maxime plantis frequens, ut proficiant, necessaria est irrigatio. Satis ex ipsa fœminei sexus natura debilis est hæc plantatio: est infirma, etsi non esset nova. Unde diligentiolem culturam exigit & frequentio-rem, juxta illud Apostoli: "Ego plantavi, Apollo rigavit, Deus autem incrementum dedit." Plantaverat Apostolus atque fundaverat in fide per prædicationis suæ doctrinam Corinthios, quibus scribebat. Rigaverat postmodum eos ipsius Apostoli discipulus Apollo sacris exhortationibus, & sic eis incrementum virtutum divina largita est gratia. Vitis alienæ vineam, quam non plantasti, in amaritudinem tibi conversam, admonitionibus sæpe cassis, et sacris frustra sermonibus excolis. Quid tuæ debeas attende, qui sic curam inpendis alienæ. Doces & admones rebelles, nec proficis. Frustra ante porcos divini eloquii margaritas spargis. Qui obstinatis tanta inpendis, quid obedientibus debeas considera. Qui tanta hostibus largiris, quid filiabus debeas meditare. Atque ut cæteras omittam, quanto erga me te obligaveris debito, pensa: ut



quod devotis communiter debes fœminis , unicæ tuæ devotius solvas.

Quot autem & quantos Tractatus in doctrina , vel exhortatione , seu etiam consolatione sanctarum fœminarum sancti Patres , & quanta eos diligentia composuerint , tua melius excellentia quam nostra parvitas novit. Unde non mediocri admiratione nostræ tenera conversionis initia tua jamdudum oblivio movit , quod nec reverentia Dei , nec amore nostri , nec sanctorum Patrum exemplis admonitus , fluctuantem me & jam diutino mœrore confectam , vel sermone præsentem , vel Epistola absentem consolari tentaveris. — Cui quidem tanto te majore debito noveris obligatum , quanto te amplius nuptialis fœdere sacramenti constat esse adstrictum : et eo te magis mihi obnoxium , quo te semper , ut omnibus patet , immoderato amore complexa sum.

Nosti charissime , noverunt omnes , quanta in te amiserim , & quam miserabili casu summa & ubique nota proditio me ipsam quoque mihi tecum abstulerit , et incomparabiliter major sit dolor ex amissionis modo , quam ex damno. Quo vero major est dolendi causa , majora sunt consolationis adhibenda remedia. Non utique ab alio , sed à teipso , ut qui solus es in causa dolendi , solus sis in gratia consolandi. Solus quippe es , qui me contristare , qui me lætificare , seu consolari valeas. Et solus es , qui plurimum id mihi debeas , & tunc maxime , cum universa quæ jusseris in tantum impleverim , ut , cum te in aliquo offendere non possem , meipsam pro jussu tuo perdere sustinerem. Et quod majus est , distoque mirabile , in tantam versus est amor insaniam , ut quod solum appetebat , hoc ipse sibi sine

spe recuperationis auferret. Cum ad tuam statim iussione[m] tam habitum ipsa quam animum immutarem : ut te tam corporis mei quam animi unicu[m] possessorem ostenderem.

Nihil unquam (Deus scit) in te nisi te requisivi ; te pure , non tua concupiscens. Non matrimonii fœdera , non dotes aliquas expectavi , non denique meas voluptates , aut voluntates , sed tuas (sicut ipse nosti) adimplere studui. — Et si uxoris nomen sanctius ac validius videtur , dulcius mihi semper extitit amicæ vocabulum ; aut si non indigneris . concubinæ vel scorti. Ut quo me videlicet pro te amplius humiliarem , ampliorem apud te consequerer gratiam , & sic etiam excellentiæ tuæ gloriam minus læderem.

Quod & tu ipse , tui gratia , oblitus penitus non fuisti , in ea , quam supra memini , ad Amicum Epistola pro consolatione directâ. Ubi & rationes nonnullas , quibus te à conjugii nostri infaustis thalamis revocare conabar , exponere non es dedignatus : sed plerisque tacitis , quibus amorem conjugio , libertatem vinculo præferebam. Deum testem invoco , si me Augustus universo præsidens mundo , matrimonii honore dignaretur , totumque mihi orbem confirmaret in perpetuo præsidendum , charius mihi & dignius videretur tua dici meretrix , quam illius Imperatrix. Non enim quo quisque ditior sive potentior , ideo & melior : fortunæ illud est , hoc virtutis.

Nec se minime venalem æstimet esse. quæ libentius ditiori quàm pauperi nubit , & plus in marito sua quam ipsa concupiscit. Certe quamcumque ad nuptias hæc concupiscentia ducit , merces ei potius

quam gratia debetur. Certum quippe est, eam res ipsas, non hominem sequi, & se, si posset, velle prostituere ditiori. Sicut inductio illa Aspasie Philosophæ apud Socraticum Æschinem cum Xenophonte & uxore ejus habita manifeste convincit. Quam quidem inductionem cum prædicta Philosophia ad reconciliandos invicem illos proposuisset, tali fine conclusit, “ Quia, ubi hoc peregeritis, ut neque vir  
 “ melior, neque fœmina in terris lætior sit: profecto  
 “ semper id, quod optimum putabis esse, multo ma-  
 “ xime requiretis: ut & tu maritus sis quam opti-  
 “ mæ, & hæc quam optimo viro nupta sit.”

Sancta profecto hæc plusquam Philosophica est sententia, ipsius potius Sophiæ, quam Philosophiæ dicenda. Sanctus hic error, et beata fallacia in conjugatis, ut perfecta dilectio illæsa custodiat matrimonii fœdera, non tam corporum continentiam, quam animorum pudicitiam.

At quod error cæteris, veritas mihi manifesta contulerat. Cum quod illæ videlicet de suis æstimarent maritis, hoc ego de te, hoc mundus universus non tam crederet, quam sciret. Ut tanto verior in te meus amor existeret, quanto ab errore longius abfisteret. Quis etenim Regum aut Philosophorum tuam exæquare famam poterat? Quæ te regio, aut civitas, seu villa videre non æstuabat? Quis te, rogo, in publicum procedentem conspiciere non festinabat, ac discedentem collo erecto, oculis directis non insectabatur? Quæ conjugata, quæ virgo non concupiscebat absentem, & non exardebat in præsentem? Quæ Regina vel præpotens fœmina gaudiis meis non invidebat vel thalamis?

Duo autem, fateor, tibi specialiter inerant, qui-

bus fœminarum quarum libet animos statim allicere poteras; diſtandi videlicet, et cantandi gratia. Quæ cæteros minime philoſophos aſſecutos eſſe novimus. Quibus quidem, quaſi ludo quodam, laborem exercitii recreans Philoſophici, pleraque amatorio metro vel rythmo compoſita reliquiſſi carmina, quæ præ nimia ſuavitate, tam diſtaminis, quam cantus, ſæpius frequentata, tuum in ore omnium nomen inceſſanter tenebant: ut etiam illiteratos melodiæ dulcedo tui non ſineret immemores eſſe. Atque hinc maxime in amorem tui fœminæ ſuſpirabant. Et cum horum pars maxima carminum noſtros decantaret amores, multis me regionibus brevi tempore nunciavit, & multarum in me fœminarum accendit invidiam.

Quod enim bonum animi vel corporis tuam non exornabat adoleſcentiam? Quam tunc mihi invidentem, nunc tantis privatæ deliciis compati calamitas mea non compellat? Quem, vel quam licet hoſtem, primitus debita compaſſio mihi nunc non emolliat?

Et plurimum nocens, plurimum (ut noſti) ſum innocens. Non enim rei eſſectus, ſed efficientis affectus, in crimine eſt. Nec quæ fiunt, ſed quo animo fiunt, æquitas penſat. Quem autem animum in te ſemper habuerim, ſolus qui expertus es, judicare potes. Tuo examini cuncta committo, tuo per omnia cedo teſtimonio.

Dic unum, ſi vales, cum poſt converſionem noſtram, quam tu ſolus facere decreviſti, in tantam tibi negligentiam atque oblivionem venerim, ut nec colloquio præſentis recreer, nec abſentis epiſtola conſoler: Dic, (inquam) ſi vales, aut ego, quod ſentio.



imo, quod omnes fuspiciantur, dicam. Concupiscencia te mihi potius quam amicitia fociavit, libidinis ardor potius quam amor. Ubi igitur quod desiderabas cessavit, quicquid propter hoc exhibebas pariter evanuit.

Hæc, dilectissime, non tam mea est, quam omnium conjectura, non tam specialis, quam communis, non tam privata, quam publica. Utinam mihi soli sic videretur, atque alios in excusationem sui amor tuus inveniret, per quos dolor meus paululum resideret. Utinam occasiones fingere possem, quibus te excusando mei quoquomodo tegerem utilitatem.

Attende, obsecro, quæ requiro; & parva hæc videbuntur & tibi facillima. Dum tui præsentia fraudor, verborum saltem votis, quorum tibi copia est, tuæ mihi imaginis præsentia dulcedinem. Frustra te in rebus dapnilem expecto, si in verbis avarum sustineo. Nunc vero plurimum à te me promereri credideram, cum omnia propter te compleverim, nunc in tuo maxime perseverans obsequio. Quam quidem juvenulam ad monasticæ conversationis asperitatem non religionis devotio, sed tua tantum pertraxit jussio. Ubi si nihil a te promerear, quam frustra laborem, dijudica. Nulla mihi super hoc merces expectanda est à Deo, cujus adhuc amore nihil me constat egisse. — Properantem te ad Deum secuta sum habitu, imo præcessi. Quasi enim memor uxoris Loth retro conversæ, prius me sacris vestibus & professione Monastica, quam te ipsum Deo mancipasti. In quo, fateor, uno minus de te me confidere vehementer dolui atque erubui. Ego autem (Deus scit) ad Vulcania loca te properantem

præcedere vel sequi pro jussu tuo minime dubitarem. Non enim mecum animus meus, sed tecum erat. Sed & nunc maxime si tecum non est, nusquam est. Esse vero sine te nequaquam potest. Sed ut tecum bene sit, age, obsecro. Bene autem tecum fuerit, si te propitium invenerit, si gratiam referas pro gratia, modica pro magnis, verba pro rebus. Utinam, dilecte, tua de me dilectio minus confideret, ut sollicitior esset: Sed quo te amplius nunc securum reddidi, negligentiores sustineo. Memento obsecro quæ fecerim: & quanta debeas. attende.

Dum tecum carnali frui voluptate, utrum id amore, vel libidine agerem, incertum pluribus habebatur. Nunc autem finis indicat, quo id inchoaverim principio. Omnes denique mihi voluptates interdixi, ut tuæ parerem voluntati. Nihil mihi reservavi, nisi sic tuam nunc præcipue fieri. Quæ vero tua sit iniquitas, perpende, si merenti amplius persolvis minus, imo nihil penitus: præsertim cum parvum sit, quod exigeris, & tibi facillimum.

Per ipsum itaque, cui te obtulisti, Deum te obsecro, ut, quoquo modo potes, tuam mihi præsentiam reddas, consolationem videlicet mihi aliquam rescribendo. Hoc saltem pacto, ut sic recreata divino alacrior vacem obsequio. Cum me ad temporales olim voluptates expeteres, crebris me Epistolis visitabas, frequenti carmine tuam in ore omnium Heloissam ponebas. Me plateæ omnes, me domus singulæ resonabant. Quanto autem rectius me nunc in Deum, quam tunc in libidinem excitares? Perpende, obsecro, quæ debes, attende, quæ posulo; & longam Epistolam brevi sine concludo. Vale Unice;

## ABÆLARDI RESPONSIO.

*Heloissæ, dilectissimæ Sorori suæ in Christo, Abælardus,  
Frater ejus in ipso.*

QUOD post nostram à sæculo ad Deum conversionem nondum tibi aliquid consolationis vel exhortationis scripserim, non negligentiam meam, sed tuam, de qua semper plurimum confido, prudentiam imputandum est. Non enim eam his indigere credidi, cui abundanter, quæ necessaria sunt, divina gratia impertivit, ut tam verbis quam exemplis errantes valeas docere, pusillannimos consolari, tepidos exhortari.

Sicut & facere jamdudum consuevisti, cum sub Abbatissa Prioratum obtineres. Quod si nunc tanta diligentia tuis provideas filiabus, quanta tunc fororibus, satis esse credimus, ut jam omnino superfluum doctrinam vel exhortationem nostram arbitremur. Sin autem humilitati tuæ hoc aliter videtur, & in iis etiam, quæ ad Deum pertinent, magisterio nostro atque scriptis indiges, super his quæ velis, scribe mihi, ut ad ipsam rescribam, prout Dominus mihi annuerit.

Deo autem gratias, qui gravissimorum & assiduorum periculorum meorum sollicitudinem vestris cordibus inspirans, afflictionis meæ participes vos fecit, ut orationum suffragio vestrarum Divina miseratio me protegat, & velociter Sathanam sub pedibus nostris conterat. Ad hoc autem præcipue Psalterium, quod a me sollicite requisisti, soror in sæculo quondam chara, nunc in Christo charissima, mittere maturavi. In quo videlicet pro nostris magnis &

multis excessibus, & quotidiana periculorum meorum instantia, jube Domino sacrificium immoles orationum.

Quantum autem locum apud Deum & Sanctos ejus fidelium orationes obtineant, & maxime mulierum pro charis suis, & uxorum pro viris, multa nobis occurrunt testimonia & exempla. Quod diligenter attendens Apostolus, sine intermissione orare nos admonet. Legimus Dominum Moyſi dixiſſe, „ Dimitte me ut „ irascatur furor meus.” Et Hieremiæ: „ Tu vero, „ inquit, noli orare pro populo hoc, & non obſiſtas mihi.” Ex quibus videlicet verbis manifeste Dominus ipse profitetur orationes Sanctorum, quasi quoddam frænum iræ ipsius immittere, quo scilicet ipsa coërceatur, ne quantum merita peccantium exigunt ipsa in eos sæviat. Ut quem ad vindictam justitia quasi spontaneum ducit, amicorum supplicatio flectat, & tanquam invitum quasi vi quadam retineat. Sic quippe oranti vel oraturo dicetur, „ Dimitte me, & ne obſiſtas mihi.” Præcipit Dominus ne oretur pro impiis. Orat justus Domino prohibente, & ab ipso impetrat quod postulat, & irati judicis sententiam immutat. Sic quippe de Moyſe subjunctum est: „ Et placatus factus est Dominus „ de malignitate, quam dixit facere populo suo.”

Scriptum est alibi de universis operibus Dei: „ Dixit, & facta sunt.” Hoc autem loco & dixiſſe memoratur, quod de afflictione populus meruerat, & virtute orationis præventus non impleſſe, quod dixerat. Attende itaque quanta sit orationis virtus, si quod jubemur, oremus: quando id, quod orare Prophetam Deus prohibuit, orando tamen obtinuit, & ab eo quod dixerat eum avertit. Cui & alius Propheta dicit: „ Et cum iratus fueris, misericordiæ recordaberis.”



Audiant id atque advertant Principes terreni, qui occasione præpositæ & edictæ justitiæ suæ obstinati magis quam iusti reperiuntur, & se remissos videri erubescunt, si misericordes fiant, & mendaces, si edictum suum mutent, vel quod minus provide statuerunt non impleant, etsi verba rebus emendent. Quos quidem recte dixerim Jephthæ comparandos, qui quod stulte voverat, stultius adimplens, unicam interfecit.

Qui vero ejus membrum fieri cupit, tunc cum Psalmista dicit, „Misericordiam & judicium cantabo „ tibi Domine. Misericordia, sicut scriptum est, „ judicium exaltat, attendens quod alibi Scriptura „ comminatur, Judicium sine misericordia in eum, „ qui misericordiam non facit.”

Quod diligenter ipse Psalmista considerans, ad supplicationem uxoris Nabal Carmeli juramentum, quod ex justitia fecerat, de viro ejus scilicet & ipsius domo delenda, per misericordiam cassavit. Orationem itaque justitiæ prætulit, & quod vir deliquerat, supplicatio uxoris delevit.

In quo quidem tibi, soror, exemplum proponitur, & securitas datur, ut si hujus oratio apud hominem tantum obtinuit, quid apud Deum tua pro me audeat instruaris. Plus quippe Deus, qui pater est noster, filios diligit; quam David sæminam supplicantem. Et ille quidem pius & misericors habebatur, sed ipsa pietas & misericordia Deus est. Et quæ tunc supplicabat mulier, sæcularis erat & Laica, nec ex sanctæ devotionis professione Domino copulata. Quod si ex te minus ad impetrandum sufficias, sanctus qui tecum est, tam virginum quam viduarum Conventus, quod per te non potes, obtinebit. Cum enim discipulis Veritas dicat. „Ubi duo vel

“ très congregati fuerint in nomine meo , ibi sum  
 “ in medio eorum.” Et rursus, “ Si duo ex vobis  
 “ consenserint de omni re quam petierunt , fiet illud  
 “ à Patre meo :” Quis non videat quantum apud  
 Deum valeat sanctæ congregationis frequens oratio ?  
 Si , ut Apostolus asserit , “ Multum valet oratio iusti  
 assidua , ” quid de multitudine sanctæ congregationis  
 sperandum est ?

Nosti , charissima soror , ex Homilia Beati Gregorii ,  
 quantum suffragium invito seu contradicenti fratri  
 oratio fratrum naturæ attulerit. De quo jam ad  
 extremum ducto quanta periculi anxietate miserrima  
 ejus anima laboraret , & quanta desperatione & tædio  
 vitæ fratres ab oratione revocaret , quid ibi diligenter  
 scriptum sit , tuam minime latet prudentiam. Atque  
 utinam confidentius te , & sanctarum Conventum  
 sororum , ad orationem invitet , ut me scilicet vobis  
 ipse vivum custodiat , per quem , Paulo attestante , mor-  
 tuos etiam suos de resurrectione mulieres acceperunt.

Si enim veteris & Evangelici Testamenti paginas  
 revolvās , invenies maxima resurrectionis miracula  
 solis vel maxime scæminis exhibita fuisse , pro ipsis ,  
 vel de ipsis facta. Duos quippe mortuos suscitatos  
 ad supplicationes maternas vetus commemorat Testa-  
 mentum , per Heliam scilicet , & ipsius discipulum  
 Helisæum. Evangelium vero trium tantum mortuo-  
 rum suscitationem à Domino factam continet , quæ  
 mulieribus exhibita , maxime illud , quod supra  
 commemoravimus , Apostolicum dictum rebus suis  
 confirmant. “ Acceperunt mulieres de resurrectione  
 “ mortuos suos.” Filium quippe viduæ ad portam  
 civitatis Naim suscitatum matri reddidit , ejus com-  
 passione compunctus. Lazarum quoque amicum suum

ad obsecrationem sororum ejus, Mariæ videlicet ac Marthæ, fuscitavit. Quo etiam Archifynagogi filiæ hanc ipsam gratiam ad petitionem patris impendente, “Mulieres de resurrectione mortuos suos acceperunt:” cum hæc videlicet fuscitata proprium de morte receperit corpus, sicut illæ corpora suorum. Et paucis quidem intervenientibus hæ factæ sunt resurrectiones. Vitæ vero nostræ conversationem multiplex vestræ devotionis oratio facile obtinebit.

Quarum tam abstinencia quam continentia Deo sacrata, quanto ipse gratior habetur, tanto ipsum propitiorem inveniet. Et plerique fortassis horum, qui fuscitati sunt, nec fideles extiterunt, sicut nec vidua prædicta, cui non roganti filium Dominus fuscitavit, fidelis extitisse legitur. Nos autem invicem non solum fidei colligat integritas, verum etiam ejusdem religionis professio sociat.

Ut autem sacrosancti Collegii vestri nunc omit- tam Conventum, in quo plurimarum virginum ac viduarum devotio Domino jugiter deservit; ad te unam veniam, cujus apud Deum sanctitatem plurimum non ambigo posse, & quæ potes mihi præcipue debere, maxime in tantæ adversitatis laboranti discrimine. Memento itaque semper in orationibus tuis ejus, qui specialiter est tuus, & tanto confidentius in oratione vigila, quanto id esse tibi recognoscis justius, & ob hoc ipsi qui orandus est acceptabilius. Exaudi, obsecro, aure cordis, quod sæpius audisti aure corporis. Scriptum est in Proverbiis, “Mulier diligens corona est viro suo.” Et rursum, “Qui invenit mulierem bonam, invenit bonum: & hauriet jucunditatem à Domino.” Et iterum, “Domus & divitiæ dantur a parentibus, à

“Domino autem proprie uxor prudens.” Et in Ecclesiastico, “Mulieris bonæ beatus vir.” Et post pauca, “Pars bona, mulier bona.” Et juxta auctoritatem Apostolicam, “Sanctificatus est vir in-  
“fidelis per mulierem fidelem.”

Cujus quidem rei experimentum in regno præcipuè nostro, id est Francorum, divina specialiter exhibuit gratia, cum ad orationem videlicet uxoris magis quam ad sanctorum prædicationem, Clodoveo Rege ad fidem Christi converso, regnum sic universum divinis legibus mancipaverunt, ut exemplo maxime superiorum ad orationis instantiam inferiores provocarentur. Ad quam quidem instantiam Dominica nos vehementer invitans parabola: “Ille, inquit, si perseveraverit pulsans: dico  
“vobis, quia si non dabit ei, eo quod amicus  
“illius sit, propter improbitatem ejus surget, &  
“dabit ei quotquot habet necessarios.” Ex hac profecto, ut ita dicam, orationis improbitate, sicut supra memini, Moyse divinæ justitiæ severitatem enervavit, & sententiam immutavit.

Nosti, dilectissima, quantum charitatis affectum præsentiae meæ Conventus olim vester in oratione solitus sit exhibere. Ad expletionem namque quotidie singularum Horarum specialem pro me Domino supplicationem hanc offerre consuevit, ut Responso proprio, cum Versu ejus præmissis & decantatis, preces his & Collectam in hunc modum subjungeret. Responsum. “Non me derelinquas, nec dis-  
“cedas à me Domine.” Vers. “In adjutorium  
“meum semper intende Domine.” Preces. “Salvum  
“fac servum tuum Deus meus sperantem in te.  
“Domine exaudi orationem meam, & clamor meus



“ ad te veniat.” Oratio. “ Deus qui per servulum  
 “ tuum ancillulas tuas in nomine tuo dignatus es  
 “ aggregare, te quæsumus; ut tam ipsi quam nobis  
 “ in tua tribuas perseverare voluntate. Per Do-  
 “ minum, &c.” Nunc autem absenti mihi tanto  
 amplius orationum vestrarum opus est suffragio,  
 quanto majoris anxietate periculi constringor. Sup-  
 plicando itaque postulo, & postulando supplico,  
 quatenus præcipue nunc absens experiar, quam vere  
 charitas vestra erga absentem extiterit, singulis vi-  
 delicet Horis expletis, hunc orationis propriæ mo-  
 dum adnectens. Resp. “ Ne derelinquas me, Domi-  
 “ ne pater & dominator vitæ meæ, ut non corruam  
 “ in conspectu adversariorum meorum, & ne gaudeat  
 “ de me inimicus meus.” Vers. “ Apprehende armâ  
 “ & scutum, & exurge in adjutorium mihi. Ne  
 “ gaudeat.” Preces. “ Salvum fac servum tuum Deus  
 “ meus sperantem in te. Mitte ei Domine auxilium  
 “ de sancto: & de Sion tuere eum. Esto ei Domine  
 “ turris fortitudinis à facie inimici. Domine exau-  
 “ di orationem meam: & clamor meus ad te veniat.”  
 Oratio. “ Deus qui per servum tuum ancillulas tuas  
 “ in nomine tuo dignatus es aggregare, te quæsu-  
 “ mus, ut eum ab omni adversitate protegas, & an-  
 “ cillis tuis incolumem reddas. Per Dominum &c.”

Quod si me Dominus in manibus inimicorum tra-  
 diderit, scilicet ut ipsi prævalentes me interficiant,  
 aut quocunque casu viam universæ carnis absens a  
 vobis ingrediar: cadaver obsecro nostrum, ubicun-  
 que vel sepultum, vel expositum jacuerit, ad Cimi-  
 terium vestrum deferri faciatis, ubi filiæ nostræ,  
 imo in Christo sorores, sepulchrum nostrum sæpius  
 videntes, ad preces pro me Domino fundendas

amplius invitentur. Nullum quippe locum animæ dolenti, de peccatorum suorum errore desolatæ, tutiorem ac salubriorem arbitror, quam eum qui vero Paracleta, id est consolatori proprie consecratus est, & de ejus nomine specialiter insignitus. Nec Christianæ sepulturæ locum rectius apud aliquos fideles, quam apud scæminas in Christo devotas consistere cenfeo. Quæ de Domini Jesu Christi sepultura sollicitæ, eam unguentis præciosis, & præven-runt & subsecutæ sunt, & circa ejus sepulchrum studiose vigilantes, & sponsi mortem lachrimabiliter plangentes, sicut scriptum est, “Mulieres sedentes ad monumentum lamentabantur flentes Dominum.” Primo ibidem de resurrectione ejus Angelica apparitione & allocutione sunt consolatæ, & statim ipsius de resurrectionis gaudia, eo bis eis apparente, percipere meruerunt & manibus contrectare.

Illud autem demum super omnia posulo, ut qua nunc de corporis mei periculo nimia sollicitudine laboratis, tunc præcipue de salute animæ sollicitæ, quantum dilexeritis vivum exhibeatis defuncto, orationum videlicet vestrarum speciali quodam & proprio suffragio. Viye, vale, vivantque tuæ, valeantque sorores. Vivite, sed Christo quæso mei memores.

E P I S T O L A II.

H E L O I S S Æ.

*Unico suo post Christum, Unica sua in Christo.*

**M**IRORE, (Unice meus!) quod præter consuetudinem Epistolarum, imo contra ipsum ordinem naturalem rerum, in ipsa fronte salutationis Epistolaris me tibi præponere præsumpsisti: sceminam videlicet viro, uxorem marito, ancillam Domino, Monialem Monacho & Sacerdoti, Diaconissam Abbati. Rectus quippe ordo est & honestus, ut quid ad superiores vel ad pares scribunt, eorum, quibus scribunt, nomina suis anteponant. Sin autem ad inferiores, præcedunt scriptionis ordine, qui præcedunt rerum dignitate.

Illud etiam non parva admiratione suscepimus, quod, quibus consolationis remedium afferre debuisti, desolationem auxisti; &, quas mitigare debueras, excitasti lachrymas. Quæ enim nostrum ficcis oculis audire possit, quod circa finem Epistolæ posuisti dicens: "Quod si me Dominus in manus inimicorum tradiderit, ut me scilicet prævalentes interficiant, &c." O charissime, quo id animo cogitasti, quo id ore dicere sustinuisti? Nunquam ancillulas suas adeo Deus obliviscatur, ut eas tibi superstitites reservet. Nunquam nobis vitam illam concedat, quæ omni genere mortis sit gravior. Te nostras exequias celebrare, te nostras Deo animas convenit commendare, & quas Deo aggregasti, ad ipsum præmittere, ut nulla amplius de ipsis per-

turberis sollicitudine, & tanto lætior nos subsequaris, quanto securior de nostra salute jam fueris.

Parce obsecro, Domine, parce hujusmodi dictis, quibus miseras miserrimas facias; & ut ipsum quodcumque vivimus ne nobis auferes ante mortem. Sufficit diei malitia sua, & dies illa omnibus, quos inveniet, fatis secum sollicitudinis afferet omni amaritudine involuta. “ Quid enim necesse est, inquit Seneca, “ mala arcessere, & ante mortem vitam perdere? ”

Rogas, unice, ut quocumque casu nobis absens hanc vitam finieris, ad Cimiterium nostrum corpus tuum adferri faciamus: ut orationum scilicet nostrarum ex assidua tui memoria ampliorum assequaris fructum. At vero quomodo memoriam tui à nobis labi posse suspicaris? Aut quod orationi tempus tunc erit commodum, quando summa perturbatio nihil permittet quietum? cum nec anima rationis sensum, nec lingua sermonis retinebit usum? Cum mens insana in ipsum, ut ita dicam, Deum magis, irata quam pacata, non tam orationibus ipsum placabit quam querimoniis irritabit? Flere tunc miseris tantum vacabit, non orare licebit, & te magis subsequi quam sepelire maturandum erit, ut potius & nos consepeliendæ simus quam sepelire possimus. Quæ cum in te nostram amiserimus vitam vivere te recedente nequaquam poterimus. Atque utinam nec tunc usque possimus! Mortis tuæ mentio mors quædam nobis est. Ipsa autem mortis hujus veritas quid, si nos inveniret, futura est? Nunquam Deus annuat, ut hoc tibi debitum superstites persolvamus, ut hoc tibi patrocinio subveniamus, quod à te penitus expectamus. In hoc utinam te præcessuræ, non secuturæ.



Parce itaque obsecro nobis, parce itaque unicæ saltem tuæ, hujusmodi scilicet supersedendo verbis, quibus, tanquam gladiis mortis, nostras transverberas animas: ut quod mortem prævenit ipsa morte gravius sit. — Confectus mœrore animus quietus non est, nec Deo sincere potest vacare mens perturbationibus occupata. Noli, obsecro, divinum impedire servitium, cui nos maxime mancipasti. Omne inevitabile, quod cum acciderit, mœrorem maximum secum inferet, ut subito veniat optandum est; ne timore inutili diu ante cruciet, cui nulla succurri providentia potest. Quod & Poeta bene considerans Deum precatur dicens:

Sit subitum quodcunque paras, sit cæca futuri  
Mens hominum fati. Liccat sperare timenti.

LUCAN.

Quid autem te admissio sperandum mihi superest? aut quæ in hac peregrinatione causa remanendi, ubi nullum nisi te remedium habeam, & nullum aliud in te nisi hoc ipsum, quod vivis: omnibus de te mihi aliis voluptatibus interdictis, cui nec præsentia tua concessum est frui, ut quandoque mihi reddi valeam?

O, si fas sit dici, crudelem mihi per omnia Deum! O inclementem clementiam! O infortunatam fortunam! quæ jam in me universi conaminis sui tela in tantum consumpsit, ut quibus in alios sæviat jam non habeat! Plenam in me pharetram exhausit, ut frustra jam alii bella ejus formident. Nec si ei adhuc telum aliquod superesset, locum in me vulneris inveniret. Unum inter tot vulnera metuit, ne morte supplicia finiam. Et cum interimere non cesset, interitum tamen quem accelerat, timet. O me

miserarum miserrimam ! infelicium infelicissimam ! quæ, quanto universis in te sceminis prælata sublimiorem obtinui gradum, tanto hinc prostrata graviorem in te & in me pariter perpeffa sum casum. Quanto quippe altior ascendentis gradus, tanto gravior corruentis casus. Quam mihi nobilium ac potentium scëminarum fortuna unquam præponere potuit aut æquare ? Quam denique adeo dejecit & dolore conficere potuit ? Quam in te mihi gloriam contulit ? Quam in te mihi ruinam intulit ? Quam mihi vehemens in utramque partem extitit, ut nec in bonis nec in malis modum habuerit ? Quæ, ut me miserrimam omnium faceret, omnibus ante beatior effecerat : ut, cum, quanta perdididi, pensarem, tanto me majora consumerent lamenta, quanto me majora oppresserant damna : & tanto major amissorum succederet dolor, quanto major possessorum præcesserat amor, & summæ voluptatis gaudia summa mœroris terminaret tristitia.

Et ut ex injuria major indignatio surgeret, omnia in nobis æquitatis jura pariter sunt perversa. Dum enim solliciti amoris gaudiis frueremur, & ut turpiore, sed expressiore vocabulo utar, fornicationi vacaremus, divina nobis severitas pepercit. Ut autem illicita licitis correximus, & honore conjugii turpitudinem fornicationis operuimus, ira Domini manum suam super nos vehementer aggravavit, & immaculatum non pertulit thorum, qui diu ante sustinuerat pollutum.

Deprehensis in quovis adulterio viris hæc satis esset ad vindictam pœna, quam pertulisti. Quod ex adulterio promerentur alii, id tu ex conjugio incurristi, per quod jam te omnibus satisfecisse con-

fidebas injuriis. Quod fornicatoribus suis adulteræ , hoc propria uxor tibi contulit. Nec cum pristinis vacaremus voluptatibus , sed cum jam ad tempus segregati castius viveremus , te quidem Parisiis Scholis præfidente , & me ad imperium tuum Argenteoli cum Sædimonialibus conversante. Divisis itaque sic nobis ad invicem , ut tu studiosius Scholis , ego liberior orationi sive sacræ lectionis meditationi vacarem ; & tanto nobis sanctius , quanto castius de gentibus , solus in corpore luisti , quod duo pariter commiseramus. Solus in pœna fuisti , duo in culpa : & qui minus debueras , totum pertulisti.

Quanto enim amplius te pro me humiliando satisfeceras , & me pariter & totum genus meum sublimaveras ; tanto te minus tam apud Deum , quam apud illos proditores , obnoxium pœnæ reddideras. O me miseram in tanti sceleris causa progenitam ! O summam in viros summos & consuetam sæminarum perniciem ! Hinc de muliere cavenda scriptum est in Proverbiis : “ Nunc ergo , fili , audi me , & attende verbis oris mei. Ne abstrahatur in viis illius mens tua , neque decipiaris semitis ejus. Multos enim vulneratos dæjecit , & fortissimi quique interfecdi sunt ab ea. Viæ inferi domus ejus penetrantes in inferiora mortis.” Et in Ecclesiaste : “ Lustravi universa animo meo , & inveni amariorem morte mulierem , quæ laqueus venatorum est , & sagma cor ejus. Vincula enim sunt manus ejus. Qui placet Deo , effugiet eam. Qui autem peccator est , capietur ab illa.”

Prima statim mulier de Paradiso virum captivavit , & quæ ei à Domino creata fuerat in auxilium , in summum ei conversa est exitium. Fortissimum illum

Nazarenum Domini, & Angelo nunciante conceptum, Dalila sola superavit, & cum inimicis proditum & oculis privatum ad hoc tandem dolor compulit, ut se pariter cum ruina hostium opprimeret. Sapientissimum omnium Salomonem, sola quam sibi copulaverat mulier infatuavit, & in tantam compulit insaniam, ut eum quem ad ædificandum sibi Dominus templum elegerat, patre ejus David, qui justus fuerat, in hoc reprobato, ad idololatriam ipsa usque in finem vitæ dejiceret; ipso quem tam verbis quam scriptis prædicabat atque docebat, divino cultu derelicto. Job sanctissimus in uxore novissimam atque gravissimam sustinuit pugnam, quæ eum ad maledicendum Deo stimulabat. Et callidissimus temptator hoc optime noverat, quod sæpius expertus fuerat; virorum videlicet ruinam in uxoribus esse facillimam.

Qui denique etiam usque ad nos consuetam extendens malitiam, quem de fornicatione sternere non potuit, de conjugio temptavit: & bono male est usus, qui malo male uti non est permissus.

Deo saltem super hoc gratias, quod me ille, ut supra-positas scæminas, in culpam ex consensu non traxit; quam tamen in causam commissæ malitiæ ex effectu convertit. Sed & si purget animum meum innocentia, nec hujus reatum sceleris consensus incurrat: peccata tamen multa præcesserunt, quæ me penitus immunem ab hujus reatu sceleris esse non sinunt. Quod videlicet diu ante carnalium illecebrarum voluptatibus serviens, ipsa tunc merui quod nunc plector, & præcedentium in me peccatorum sequentia merito facta sunt pœna. Etiam malis iniitiis perversus imputandus est exitus. Atque uti-



nam hujus præcipuæ commissi dignam agere valeam pœnitentiam, ut pœna illi tuæ vulneris illati ex longa saltem pœnitentiæ contritione vicem quoque modo recompenfare queam : & quod tu ad horam in corpore pertulisti, ego in omni vita, ut justum est, in contritione mentis suscipiam, & hoc tibi saltem modo, si non Deo, satisfaciam,

Si enim vere miserrimi mei animi profitear infirmitatem, qua pœnitentia Deum placare valeam non invenio, quem super hac semper injuria, summæ crudelitatis arguo; & ejus dispensationi contraria, magis eum ex indignatione offendo, quam ex pœnitentiæ satisfactione mitigo. Quomodo etiam pœnitentia peccatorum dicitur, quantacunque sit corporis afflictio, si mens adhuc ipsam peccandi retinet voluntatem, & pristinis æstuat desideriis? Facile quidem est quemlibet, confitendo peccata seipsum accusare, aut etiam in exteriori satisfactione corpus affligere. Difficillimum vero est à desideriis maximarum voluptatum avellere animum. Unde & merito sanctus Job cum præmisisset, “ Dimittam adversum me eloquium meum,” id est laxabo linguam, & aperiam os per confessionem in peccatorum meorum accusationem: statim adjunxit, “ Loquar in amaritudine animæ meæ.” Quod Beatus exponens Gregorius, “ Sunt, inquit, nonnulli, qui apertis vocibus culpas fatentur, sed tamen in confessione gemere nesciunt, & lugenda gaudentes dicunt.” Unde qui culpas suas detestans loquitur, restat necesse est ut has in amaritudine animæ loquatur; ut hæc ipsa amaritudo puniat, quicquid lingua per mentis judicium accusat.

Sed hæc quidem amaritudo veræ pœnitentiæ quam rara sit Beatus diligenter attendens Ambrosius:

“Facilius, inquit, inveni, qui innocentiam servaverunt, quam qui pœnitentiam egerunt.” In tantum vero illæ, quas pariter exercuimus, amantium voluptates dulces mihi fuerunt, ut nec displicere mihi, nec vix à memoria labi possint. Quocunque loco me vertam, semper se oculis meis cum suis ingerunt desideriiis. Nec etiam dormienti suis illusionibus parcunt.

Inter ipsa Missarum solemnia, ubi purior esse debet oratio, obscœna earum voluptatum phantasmata ita sibi penitus miserrimam captivant animam, ut turpitudinibus illis magis quam orationi vacem. Quæ cum ingemiscere debeam de commissis, suspiro potius de amissis. Nec solum quæ egimus; sed loca pariter & tempora, in quibus hæc egimus, ita tecum nostro infixæ sunt animo, ut in ipsis omnia tecum agam, nec dormiens etiam ab his quiescam.

Nonnunquam & ipso motu corporis animi mei cogitationes deprehenduntur, nec à verbis temperans improvisis. O vere me miseram & illa conqueſtione ingemiscantis animæ dignissimam! “Infelix ego  
“homo! quis me liberabit de corpore mortis hujus?” Utinam & quod sequitur veraciter addere queam!  
“Gratia Dei per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum.”

Hæc te gratia, charissime, prævenit, & ab his tibi stimulis, unam corporis plagam medendo, multas in anima sanavit; & in quo tibi amplius adversari Deus creditur, propitior invenitur: more quidem fidelissimi medici, qui non parcit dolori, ut consulet salutem. Hos autem in me stimulos carnis, hæc incentiva libidinis, ipse juvenilis fervor ætatis, & jucundissimarum experientia voluptatum, plurimum accendunt:

accendant; & tanto amplius sua me impugnatione opprimunt, quanto infirmior est natura, quam oppugnant.

Castam me prædicant, qui nonprehenderunt hypocritam. Munditiam carnis conferunt in virtutem, cum non sit corporis, sed animi virtus. Aliquid laudis apud homines habens, nihil apud Deum mereor, qui cordis & renum probator est, & in abscondito videt. Religiosa hoc tempore judicor, in quo jam parva pars religionis non est hypocrisis; ubi ille maximis extollitur laudibus, qui humanum non offendit iudicium. Et hoc fortassis aliquo modo laudabile, & Deo acceptabile quoquo modo videtur, si quis videlicet exterioris operis exemplo, quacunque intentione, non sit Ecclesiæ scandalo, nec jam per ipsum apud infideles nomen Domini blasphemetur, nec apud carnales professionis suæ ordo infametur. Atque hoc quoque nonnullum est divinæ gratiæ donum, ex cuius videlicet munere venit non solum bona facere, sed etiam à malis abstinere. Sed frustra istud præcedit, ubi illud non succedit, sicut scriptum est: "Declina à malo, & fac bonum." Et frustra utrumque geritur quod amore Dei non agitur.

In omni autem (Deus scit) vitæ meæ statu, te magis adhuc offendere, quam Deum vereor: tibi placere amplius quam ipsi appeto. Tua me ad religionis habitum iussio, non divina traxit dilectio. Vide quam infelicem, & omnibus miserabiliorem ducam vitam, si tanta hic frustra sustineo: nihil habitura remunerationis in futuro. Diu te; sicut multos; simulatio mea fefellit, ut religioni deputares hypocrisin: & ideo nostris te maxime commendans orationibus, quod à te exspecto, a me postulas.

Noli, obsecro, de me tanta præsumere, ne mihi cesses orando subvenire. Noli æstimare sanam, ne medicaminis subtrahas gratiam. Noli non egentem credere, ne differas in necessitate subvenire. Noli validam putare, ne prius corruam quam sustentem labentem. Multis fida sui laus nocuit, & præsidium quo indigebant, abstulit. Per Esaïam Dominus clamat, “ Popule meus, qui te beatificant, ipsi te “ decipiant, & viam gressum tuorum dissipant.” Et per Ezechielem, “ Væ qui consuitis, inquit, pul- “ villos sub omni cubitu manus, & cervicalia sub “ capite ætatis universæ ad decipiendas animas.” E contra autem per Salomonem dicitur, “ Verba “ sapientum quasi stimuli, & quasi clavi in altum “ defixi, qui videlicet vulnera nesciunt palpare, “ sed pungere.”

Quiesce, obsecro, à laude mea, ne turpem adulationis notam & mendacii crimen incurras: aut si quod in me suspicaris bonum, ipsum laudatum vanitatis aura ventilet. Nemo medicinæ peritus interiorem morbum ex exterioris habitus inspectione dijudicat. Nulla, quicquid meriti apud Deum obtinent, quæ reprobis æq; ut electis communia sunt. Hæc autem ea sunt, quæ exterius aguntur, quæ nulli Sanctorum tam studiose peragunt, quantum hypocritæ.

Pravum est cor hominis, & inscrutabile etiam: quis cognoscet illud? Et sunt viæ hominis quæ videntur rectæ: novissima autem illius deducunt ad mortem. Temerarium est in eo iudicium hominis, quod divino tantum reservatur examini. Unde & scriptum est: “ Ne laudaveris hominem in vita.” Ne tunc videlicet hominem laudes, dum laudando facere non laudabilem potes.



Tanto autem mihi tua laus in me periculosior est, quanto gravior: & tanto amplius ea capior & delector, quanto amplius tibi per omnia placere studeo. Time obsecro semper de me potius quam confidas, ut tua semper sollicitudine adjuver. Nunc vero præcipue timendum est, ubi nullum incontinentiæ meæ superest in te remedium.

Nolo me ad virtutem exhortans, & ad pugnam provocans, dicas: "Nam virtus in infirmitate perficitur: & non coronabitur nisi qui legitime certaverit." Non quæro coronam victoriæ. Satis est mihi periculum evitare. Tutius evitatur periculum, quam committitur bellum. Quocunque me angulo cæli Deus collocet, fatis mihi faciet. Nullus ibi cuiquam invidet, cum singulis quod habebunt suffecerit.

Cui quidem consilio nostro, ut ex autoritate quoque robur adjungam, Beatum audiamus Hieronymum: "Fateor imbecillitatem meam, nolo spe victoriæ pugnare, ne perdam aliquando victoriam." Quid necesse est certa dimittere, & incerta sectari?

## EPISTOLA II.

ABÆLARDI.

*Sponsæ Christi, Servus ejusdem.*

**I**N quatuor, memini, circa quæ Epistolæ tuæ novissimæ summa consistit, offensæ tuæ commotionem expressisti. Primo quidem super hoc conquereris, quod præter consuetudinem Epistolarum, imo etiam contra ipsum naturalem ordinem rerum, Epistola

nostra tibi directa te mihi in salutatione præposuit. Secundo, quod cum vobis consolationis potius remedium asserre debuisssem, desolationem auxi, & quas mitigare debueram lachrymas, excitavi. Illud videlicet ibidem adjungens, "Quod si me Dominus in manus inimicorum tradiderit, ut me scilicet prævalentes interficiant," &c. Tertio vero veterem illam & assiduam querelam tuam in Deum adjecisti, de modo videlicet nostræ conversionis ad Deum, & crudelitatem proditionis illius in me commissæ. Denique accusationem tui contra nostram in te laudem opposuisti, non cum supplicatione modica, ne id deinceps præsumerem.

Quibus quidem singulis rescribere decrevi, non tam pro excusatione mea, quam pro doctrina vel exhortatione tua; ut eo scilicet libentius petitionibus assentias nostris, quo eas rationabilius factas intellexeris; & tanto me amplius exaudias in tuis, quanto reprehensibilem minus invenies in meis; tantoque amplius verearis contemnere, quanto minus videris dignum reprehensione.

De ipso autem nostræ salutationis, ut dicis, ordine præposuero, juxta tuam quoque, si diligenter attendas, actum est sententiam. Id enim quod omnibus patet, tu ipsa indicasti, ut cum videlicet ad superiores scribitur, eorum nomina præponantur. Te vero ex tunc me superiorem factam intelligas, quod domina mea esse cœpisti. Domini mei sponsa effecta, juxta illud Beati Hieronimi ad Eustochium ita scribentis: "Hæc idcirco, domina mea Eustochium, scribo. Dominam quippe debeo vocare sponsam Domini mei." Felix talium commercium nuptiarum, ut homunculi miseri prius uxor, nunc

in summi Regis thalamis sublimetur. Nec ex hujus honoris privilegio priori tantummodo viro, sed quibuscunque servis ejusdem Regis prælata. Ne mire-  
ris igitur, si tam vivus quam mortuus me vestris præ-  
cipue commendem orationibus; cum jure publico  
constet, apud dominos plus eorum sponfas interce-  
dendo posse, quam ipforum famulas, dominas am-  
plius quam servos. In quarum quidem typo Regina  
illa & summi Regis sponsa diligenter describitur,  
cum in Psalmo dicitur, "Assidet Regina à dextris  
" tuis." Ac si aperte dicatur, ista juncto latere  
sponso familiarissime adhæret, & pariter incedit,  
cæteris omnibus quasi à longe absistentibus, vel  
subsequentibus. — De hujus excellentia prærogativæ  
sponsa in Canticis exultans, illa, ut ita dicam, quam  
Moyse duxit, Æthiopissa dicit: "Nigra sum, sed  
" formosa, filiæ Hierusalem. Ideo dilexit me Rex,  
" & introduxit me in cubiculum suum." Et rursum,  
" Nolite considerare quod fusca sum, quia deco-  
" loravit me Sol." — In quibus quidem verbis cum  
generaliter anima describatur contemplativa, quæ  
specialiter Sponsa Christi dicitur, expressius tamen  
ad vos hoc pertinere ipse etiam vester exterior ha-  
bitus loquitur. Ipse quippe cultus exterior nigrorum,  
aut vilium indumentorum, instar lugubris habitus  
bonarum viduarum mortuos, quos dilexerant viros,  
plangentium, vos in hoc mundo, juxta Aposto-  
lum, vere viduas, & desolatas ostendit stipendiis  
Ecclesiæ sustentandas. De quarum etiam viduarum  
luctu super occisum earum sponsum Scriptura com-  
memorat, dicens: "Mulieres sedentes ad monu-  
" mentum lamentabantur flentes Dominum." — Ha-  
bet autem Æthiopissa exteriorem in carne nigredi-

nem, & quantum ad exteriora pertinet, cæteris apparet fœminis deformior: cum non sit tamen in interioribus dispar, sed in plerisque etiam formosior, atque candidior, sicut in ossibus, seu dentibus. Quorum videlicet dentium candor in ipso etiam commendatur Sponso, cum dicitur: “Et dentes  
 “ ejus lacte candidiores.” Nigra itaque in exterioribus, sed formosa in interioribus est; quia in hac vita crebris adversitatum tribulationibus corporaliter afflicta quasi in carne nigrescit exterius, juxta illud Apostoli: “Omnes qui volunt pie vivere in Christo  
 “ tribulationem patientur.” Sicut enim candido prosperum, ita non incongrue nigro designatur ad-  
 versum. Intus autem, quasi in ossibus, candet, quia in virtutibus ejus anima pollet, sicut scriptum est: “Omnis gloria ejus filiæ Regis ab intus.” —  
 Ossâ quippe, quæ interiora sunt, exteriori carne circumdata, & ipsius carnis, quam gerunt vel sustentant, robur ac fortitudo sunt, bene animam exprimunt, quæ carnem ipsam, cui inest, vivificat, sustentat, movet, atque regit, atque ei omnem valetudinem ministrat. Cujus quidem est candor, sive decor, ipsæ, quibus adornatur, virtutes. — Nigra quoque est in exterioribus, quia dum in hac peregrinatione adhuc exulat, vilem & abjectam se tenet in hac vita; ut in illa sublimetur, quæ est abscondita cum Christo in Deo, patriam jam adepta. — Sic vero eam sol verus decolorat, quia celestis amor Sponsi eam sic humiliat, vel tribulationibus cruciat; ne eam scilicet prosperitas extollat. Decolorat eam sic, id est dissimilem eam à cæteris facit, quæ terrenis inhiant, & sæculi quærunt gloriam; ut sic ipsa vere lilium convallium per humilitatem efficiatur:



non lilium quidem montium, sicut illæ videlicet fatuæ virgines, quæ de munditia carnis, vel abstinentia exteriori, apud se intumescences, æstu temptationum aruerunt. — Bene autem filias Hierusalem, id est, imperfectiores alloquens fideles, qui filiarum potius, quam filiorum nomine digni sunt, dicit: “Nolite me considerare, quod fusca sum, quia decoloravit me Sol.” Ac si apertius dicat: quod sic me humilio, vel tam viriliter adversitates sustineo, non est meæ virtutis; sed ejus gratiæ, cui deservio. Aliter solent hæretici, vel hypocritæ, quantum ad faciem hominum spectat. spe terrenæ gloriæ sese vehementer humiliare, vel multa inutiliter tolerare. De quorum hujusmodi abjectione, vel tribulatione, quam sustinent, vehementer mirandum est; cum sint omnibus miserabiliores hominibus, qui nec præsentis vitæ bonis, nec futuræ fruuntur. — Hoc itaque Sponsa diligenter considerans dicit: “Nolite mirari, cur id faciam.” Sed de illis mirandum est, qui inutiliter terrenæ laudis desiderio æstuantes terrenis se privant commodis, tam hic, quam in futuro miseri. Qualis quidem fatuarum virginum continentia est, quæ a janua sunt exclusæ. — Bene etiam, quia nigra est, ut diximus, & formosa, dilectam, & introductam se dicit in cubiculum Regis, id est, in secretum, vel quietem contemplationis, & lectulum illum, de quo eadem alibi dicit: “In lectulo meo per noctes quæsi, quem diliget anima mea.” Ipsa quippe nigredinis deformitas occultum potius quam manifestum, & secretum magis, quam publicum amat. Et quæ talis est uxor, secreta potius viri gaudia, quam manifesta desiderat, & in lecto magis vult sentiri quam

in mensa videri. — Et frequenter accidit, ut nigrarum caro sceminarum, quanto est in aspectu deformior, tanto sit in tactu suavior: atque ideo earum voluptas secretis gaudiis, quam publicis gratior sit, & convenientior, & earum viri, ut illis oblectentur, magis eas in cubiculum introducunt, quam ad publicum educunt. — Secundum quamquidem metaphoram bene spiritualis Sponsa cum præmisisset: “Nigra sum, “sed formosa,” statim adjunxit: “Ideo dilexit me Rex, “ & introduxit me in cubiculum suum,” singula videlicet singulis reddens. Hoc est, quia formosa, dilexit, quia nigra, introduxit. Formosa, ut dixit, intus virtutibus, quas diligit Sponsus: nigra exterius corporalium tribulationum adversitatibus. — Quæ quidem nigredo, corporalium scilicet tribulationum, facile fidelium mentes ab amore terrenorum avel- lit, & ad æternæ vitæ desideria suspendit, & sæpe à tumultuosa sæculi vita trahit ad secretum contemplationis. Sicut in Paulo illo videlicet nostræ, id est, Monachalis vitæ, primordio actum esse Beatus scribit Hieronymus. — Hæc quoque adjectio indumentorum vilium secretum magis, quam publicum appetit, & maxima vilitatis, ac secretioris loci, qui nostræ præcipue convenit professioni, custodienda est. Maxime namque ad publicum procedere pretiosus provocat cultus, quem à nullo appeti, nisi ad inanem gloriam, & sæculi pompam Beatus Gregorius inde convincit: quod nemo his in occulto se ornat, sed ubi conspici queat. Hoc autem prædictum Sponsæ cubiculum illud est, ad quod ipse Sponsus in Evangelio invitat orantem, dicens: “Tu autem cum oraveris, intra in cubiculum, & clauso

ostio, ora Patrem tuum." Ac si diceret: non in plateis, vel publicis locis, sicut hypocritæ. Cubiculum itaque dicit secretum à tumultibus, & aspectu sæculi locum, ubi quietius & purius orari possit: qualia sunt scilicet Monasticarum solitudinum secreta, ubi claudere ostium jubemur, id est, aditus omnes obstruere, ne puritas orationis casu aliquo præpediatur, & oculus noster infelicem animam deprædetur. — Cujus quidem consilii, imo præcepti divini multos hujus habitus nostri contemptores adhuc graviter sustinemus, qui cum divina celebrant officia, claustris, vel choris eorum referatis, publicis tam sceminarum quam virorum aspectibus impudenter se ingerunt, & tunc præcipue cum in solemnitatibus pretiosis polluerunt ornamentis, sicut & ipsi, quibus ostentant, sæculares homines. Quorum quidem judicio tanto festivitas habetur celebrior, quanto in exteriori ornatu est ditior, & in epulis copiosior. De quorum quidem cæcitate miserima, & pauperum Christi religioni penitus contraria, tanto est filere honestius, quanto loqui turpius. Qui penitus Judaizantes consuetudinem suam sequuntur pro regula, & irritum fecerunt mandatum Dei per traditiones suas: non quod debeat, sed quod soleat attendentes. Cum, ut Beatus etiam meminit Augustinus, Dominus dixerit: "Ego sum veritas," non ego sum consuetudo. — Horum orationibus, quæ aperto scilicet sunt ostio, qui voluerit, se commendet. Vos autem, quæ in cubiculum cælestis Regis ab ipso introductæ, atque in ejus amplexibus quiescentes, clauso semper ostio, ei totæ vacatis, quanto familiarius ei adhæretis, juxta illud Apostoli, "Qui adhæret Domino, unus

“ spiritus est ,” tanto puriorem , & efficaciorē habere confidimus orationem , & ob hoc vehementius earum efflagitamus opem. Quas etiam tanto devotius pro me faciendas esse credimus , quanto majore nos invicem caritate colligati sumus.

Quod vero mentione periculi , in quo laboro , vel mortis quam timeo , vos commovi , juxta ipsam quoque tuam factum est exhortationem , imo etiam adjurationem. Sic enim prima , quam ad me direxisti , quodam loco continet Epistola : “ Per ipsum itaque qui te sibi adhuc quoquomodo protegit Christum obsecramus , quatenus ancillulas ipsius , & tuas crebris literis de his , in quibus adhuc fluctuas , naufragiis certificare digneris : ut nos saltem quæ tibi solæ remansimus doloris vel gaudii particeps habeas. Solent enim dolenti nullam adferre consolationem qui condolent. Et quodlibet onus pluribus impositum levius sustinetur , sive defertur.”

Quid igitur arguis , quod vos anxietatis meæ participes feci , ad quod me adjurando compulisti ? Nunquid in tanta vitæ , qua crucior , desperatione gaudere vos convenit ? Nec doloris sociæ , sed gaudii tantum vultis esse : nec flere cum flentibus , sed gaudere cum gaudentibus ? Nulla major verorum & falsorum differentia est amicorum , quam quod illi adversitati , isti prosperitati se sociant.

Quiesce , obsecro , ab his dictis , & hujusmodi querimonias compesce , quæ à visceribus caritatis abstinent longissime. Aut si adhuc in his offenderis , me tamen in tanto periculi possum articulo , & quotidiana desperatione vitæ , de salute animæ sollicitum esse convenit , & de ipsa , dum licet , providere. Nec



tu, si me vere diligis, hanc exosam providentiam habebis. Quinetiam si quam de divina erga me misericordia spem haberes, tanto amplius ab hujus vitæ ærumnis liberari me cuperes, quanto eas conspicias intolerabiliore. Certum quippe tibi est, quod quisquis ab hac vita me liberet, à maximis pœnis eruet. Quas postea incurram incertum est, sed à quantis absolvar dubium non est.

Omnis vita misera jucundum exitum habet, & quicunque aliorum anxietatibus vere compatiuntur & condolent, eas finire desiderant: & cum damnis etiam suis, si quos anxios vident, vere diligunt, nec tam commoda propria quam illorum in ipsis attendunt. Sic diu languentem filium mater etiam morte languorem finire desiderat, quem tolerare ipsa non potest, & eo potius orbari sustinet, quam in miseria consortem habere. Et quicunque amici præsentia plurimum oblectatur, magis tamen beatam esse vult ejus absentiam quam præsentiam miseram. Quia quibus subvenire non valet ærumnis, tolerare non potest.

Tibi vero nec nostra vel etiam misera concessum est frui præsentia. Nec ubi tuis in me commodis aliquid provideas, cur me miserrime vivere malis quam felicius mori, non video. Quod si nostras pro-  
tendi miseras in commoda tua desideras, hostis potius, quam amica convinceris. Quod si videri refugis, ab his, obsecro, sicut dixi, quiesce querimoniis.

Approbo autem, quod reprobas, laudem; quia in hoc ipso te laudabiliorem ostendis. Scriptum est enim: "Justus in primordio accusator est sui: & qui se humiliat se exaltat." Atque utinam sic sit in

animo tuo sicut in scripto ! Quod si fuerit, vera est humilitas tua, ne pro nostris evanuerit verbis. Sed vide, obsecro, ne hoc ipso laudem quæras, quo laudem fugere videris, & reprobes illud ore, quod appetas corde. De quo ad Eustochium virginem sic inter cætera Beatus scribit Hieronymus : “ Naturali ducimur malo. Adulatoribus nostris libenter favemus, & quamquam nos respondeamus indignos, & calidior rubor ora suffundat, attamen ad laudem suam intrinsecus anima lætatur.” Talem & lascivæ calliditatem Galathæ Virgilius describit, quæ quod volebat fugiendo appetebat, & simulatione repulsæ amplius in se amantem incitabat : “ Et fugit ad falices.” inquit, “ & se cupit ante videri.” Antequam lateat, cupit se fugientem videri, ut ipsa fuga, qua reprobare consortium juvenis videtur, amplius acquirat. Sic & laudes hominum dum fugere videmur, amplius erga nos excitamus, & cum latere nos velle simulamus, ne quis scilicet in nobis, quid laudet, agnoscat, amplius attendimus in laudem nostram impudentes, quia eo laude videmur digniores.

Et hæc quidem, quia sæpe accidunt, dicimus, non quia de te talia suspicemur, qui de tua non hæsitamus humilitate. Sed ab his etiam verbis te temperare volumus, ne his qui te minus noverint, videaris, ut ait Hieronymus, fugiendo gloriam quærere. Nunquam te mea laus inflabit, sed ad meliora provocabit, et tanto studiosius quæ laudavero amplecteris, quanto mihi amplius placere fatagis. Non est laus nostra testimonium tibi religionis, ut hinc aliquid extollentiæ sumas. Nec de commendatione cujusquam amicis credendum est, sicut nec inimicis de vituperatione.

Supereſt tandem , ut ad antiquam illam , ut diximus , & affiduam querimoniam tuam veniamus , quia videlicet de noſtræ converſionis modo Deum potius accuſare præſumis , quam glorificare , ut juſtum eſt , velis. Hanc jamdudum amaritudinem animi tui tam manifeſto divinæ miſericordiæ conſilio evanuiſſe credideram, Quæ quanto tibi periculoſior eſt , corpus tuum pariter & animam conterens ; tanto miſerabilior eſt , & mihi moleſtior. Quæ cum mihi per omnia placere , ſicut profiteris , ſtudeas , hoc ſaltem uno ut me non crucies , imo ut mihi ſummo-  
pere placeas , hanc depone. Cum qua mihi non potes placere , neque mecum ad beatitudinem pervenire. Sufſinebis illuc me ſine te pergere , quem etiam ad Vulcania profiteris te ſequi velle ? Hoc ſaltem uno religionem appetite , ne à me ad Deum , ut credis , properante dividaris , & tanto libentius , quanto quo veniendum nobis eſt beatius eſt ; ut tanto ſcilicet ſocietas noſtra ſit gratior , quanto felicior. Memento quæ dixeris. Recordare quæ ſcripſeris , in hoc videlicet noſtræ converſionis modo , quo mihi Deus amplius adverſari creditur , propitiorem mihi , ſicut manifeſtum eſt , extitiſſe. Hoc uno ſaltem hæc ejus diſpoſitio tibi placeat , quod mihi ſit ſaluberrima , imo mihi pariter & tibi , ſi rationem vis doloris admittat. Nec te tanti boni cauſam eſſe doleas , ad quod te à Deo maxime creatam eſſe non dubites. Nec quia id tulerim plangas , niſi cum Martyrum paſſionum , ipſuſque Dominicæ mortis commoda te contriſtabunt. Nunquid ſi id mihi juſte accidiffet , tolerabilius ferres , & minus te offenderet ? Proſeſſo ſi ſic fieret , eo modo contingeret quo mihi eſſet ignominioſius , & inimicis laudabilius ; cum illis

laudem iustitia, & mihi contemptum acquireret culpa. Nec jam quisquam quod actum est accusaret, ut compassione mei moveretur.

Ut tamen & hoc modo hujus amaritudinem doloris leniamus; tam iuste quam utiliter id monstrabimus nobis accidisse, & rectius in conjugatos quam in fornicantes ultum Deum fuisse. Nôsti post nostri confœderationem conjugii, cum Argenteoli cum Sandimonialibus in claustro conversabaris, me die quadam privatim ad te visitandam venisse, & quid ibi tecum meæ libidinis egerit intemperantia in quadam etiam parte ipsius refectorii, cum quo alias diverteremus, non haberemus. Nôsti, inquam, id impudentissime tunc actum esse in tam reverendo loco & summæ Virgini consecrato. Quod, etsi alia cessent flagitia, multo graviore dignum sit ultione. Quid pristinas fornicationes & impudentissimas referam pollutiones quæ conjugium præcesserunt? Quid summam denique prodicionem meam, qua de te ipsa tuum, cum quo assidue in ejus domo vivebam, avunculum tam turpiter seduxi? Quis me ab eo iuste prodi non censeat, quem tam impudenter ante ipse prodideram? Putas ad tantorum criminum ultionem momentaneum illius plagæ dolorem sufficere? Imo tantis malis tantum debitum esse commodum? Quam plagam divinæ sufficere iustitiæ credis ad tantam contaminationem, ut diximus, sacerrimi loci suæ matris? Certe nisi vehementer erro, non tam illa saluberrima plaga in ultionem horum conversa est, quam quæ hodie indefinenter sustineo.

Nôsti etiam quando te gravidam in meam transmissi patriam, sacro te habitu indutam, Monialem



te finxisse, & tali simulatione tuæ, quam nunc habes, religioni, irreverenter illufisse. Unde etiam pensa, quam convenienter ad hanc te religionem divina justitia, imo gratia traxerit nolentem, cui verita non es illudere, volens, ut in ipso luas habitu, quod in ipsum deliquisti, & simulationis mendacio ipsa rei veritas remedium præstet, & falsitatem emendet.

Quod si divinæ in nobis justitiæ nostram velis utilitatem adjungere, non tam justitiam, quam gratiam Dei quod tunc egit in nobis poteris appellare. Attende, itaque, attende, charissima, quibus misericordiæ suæ retibus à profundo hujus tam periculosi maris nos Dominus piscaverit, & à quantæ Charybdis voragine naufragos, licet invitos, extra-xerit, ut merito uterque nostrum in illam prorumpere posse videatur vocem: “ Dominus sollicitus est “ mei.” Cogita & recogita, in quantis ipsi nos periculis constituti eramus, & à quantis nos eruerit Dominus: & narra semper cum summa gratiarum actione, quanta fecit Dominus animæ nostræ: et quoslibet iniquos de bonitate Domini desperantes nostro consolare exemplo, ut advertant omnes quid supplicantibus atque petentibus fiat, cum tam peccatoribus & invitis tanta præstentur beneficia. Perpende altissimum in nobis divinæ consilium pietatis, & quam misericorditer judicium suum Dominus in correptionem verterit, & quam prudenter malis quoque ipsis usus sit, & impietatem piè deposuerit, ut unius partis corporis mei justissima plaga duabus mederetur animabus. Confer periculum & liberationis modum. Confer languorem & medicinam. Meritorum causas inspice, & miserationis affectus admirare. — Nosti quantis turpitudinibus immoderata

mea libido corpora nostra addixerat, ut nulla honestatis vel Dei reverentia in ipsis etiam diebus Dominicæ Passionis, vel quantarumcumque solennitatum ab hujus luti volutatio me revocaret. Sed & te nolentem, & prout poteras reluctantem & dissuadentem, quæ natura infirmior eras, sæpius minis ac flagellis ad consensum trahebam. Tanto enim tibi concupiscentiæ ardore copulatus eram, ut miseris illas & obscœnissimas voluptates, quas etiam nominare confundimur, tam Deo, quam mihi ipsi præponerem: nec tam aliter consulere posse divina videretur clementia, nisi has mihi voluptates sine spe ulla omnino interdiceret. — Unde iustissime & clementissime, licet cum summa tui avunculi prodictione, ut in multis crescerem, parte illa corporis sum minutus, in qua libidinis regnum erat, & tota hujus concupiscentiæ causa consistebat: ut iuste illud plesteretur membrum, quod in nobis commiserat totum, & expiaret patiendo, quod deliquerat oblectando: & ab his me spurcitiis, quibus me totum quasi luto immerferam, tam mente quam corpore circumcideret: & tanto sacris etiam altaribus idoniorum efficeret, quanto me nulla hinc amplius carnalium contagia pollutionum revocarent. Quam clementer etiam in eo tantum me pati voluit membro, cujus privatio & animæ saluti consuleret, & corpus non deterparet, nec ullam officiorum ministracionem præpediret. Imo ad omnia, quæ honeste geruntur, tanto me promptiorem efficeret, quanto ab hoc concupiscentiæ jugo maximo amplius liberaret. Cum itaque membris his vilissimis, quæ pro summæ turpitudinis exercitio pudenda vocantur, nec proprium sustinent nomen, me divina

gratia

gratia mundavit, potius quam privavit, quid aliud egit quam ad puritatem mundiciæ conservandam fordida removit & vitia? — Hanc quidem mundiciæ puritatem nonnullos sapientium vehementissime appetentes inferre etiam sibi manum audivimus, ut hoc à se penitus removerent concupiscentiæ flagitium. Pro quo etiam stimulo carnis auferendo & Apostolus perhibetur. Dominum rogasse, nec exauditum esse. In exemplo est ille magnus Christianorum Philosophus Origenes, qui, ut hoc in se penitus incendium extingueret, manus sibi inferre veritus non est: ac si illos ad litteram vere beatos intelligeret, qui seipsos propter regnum cælorum castraverunt, & tales illud veraciter implere crederet, quod de membris scandalizantibus nobis præcipit Dominus, ut ea scilicet à nobis abscindamus & projiciamus, & quasi illam Isaïæ Prophetiam ad historiam magis quam ad mysterium duceret, per quam cæteris fidelibus Eunuchos Dominus præfert, dicens; “ Eunuchi  
 “ si custodierint sabbatha mea, & elegerint quæ volui,  
 “ dabo eis in domo mea & in muris meis locum,  
 “ & nomen melius à filiis & filiabus. Nomen sempi-  
 “ ternum dabo eis, quod non peribit.” Culpam tamen non modicam Origenes incurrit, dum per pœnam corporis remedium culpæ quærit. — Zelum quippe Dei habens, sed non secundum scientiam, homicidii, incurrit reatum inferendo sibi manum. Suggestione diabolica, vel errore maximo id ab ipso constat esse factum. quod miseratione Dei, in me est ab alio perpetratum. Culpam evito, non incurro. Mortem mereor, & vitam assequor. Vocor, & reluctor. Insto criminibus, & ad veniam trahor invitus. Orat Apostolus, nec exauditur. Precibus

inflat, nec impetrat. Vere Dominus sollicitus est mei. Vadam igitur & narrabo quanta fecit Dominus animæ meæ.

Accede & tu inseparabilis comes in una gratiarum actione, quæ & culpæ particeps facta es & gratiæ. Nam & tuæ Dominus non immemor salutis, imo plurimum tui memor, qui etiam sancto quodam nominis præfatio te præcipue suam fore præsignavit, cum te videlicet Heloissam ex proprio nomine suo, quod est Heloym, insignivit.

Ipse, inquam, clementer disposuit in uno duobus consulere, quos diabolus in uno nitebatur extinguere. Paululum enim antequam hoc accideret, nos indissolubilis lex sacramenti nuptialis invicem adstrinxerat, cum cuperem te mihi supra modum dilectam in perpetuum retinere, imo cum ipse jam tractaret ad se nos ambos hac occasione convertere. — Si enim mihi antea matrimonio non esses copulata, facile in discessu meo à sæculo, vel suggestionem parentum, vel carnalium oblectatione voluptatum, sæculo inhæsissem. Vide ergo quantum sollicitus nostri fuerit Dominus, quasi ad magnos aliquos nos reservaret usus, & quasi indignaretur aut doleret, illa literalis scientiæ talenta, quæ utrique nostrum commiserat, ad sui nominis honorem non dispensari: aut quasi etiam de incontinentissimo servulo vereretur, quod scriptum est, “ Quia mulieres faciunt etiam apostatare sapientes.” Sicut de sapientissimo certum est Salomone.

Tuæ vero prudentiæ talentum quantas quotidie Domino referat usuras, quæ multas domino jam spirituales filias peperisti, me penitus sterili permanente, & in filiis perditionis inaniter laborante. O



quam detestabile damnum ! quam lamentabile incommodum, si carnalium voluptatum sordibus vacans paucos cum dolore pareres mundo, quæ nunc multiplicem prolem cum exultatione parturis cœlo ! Nec esses plus quam fœmina, quæ nunc etiam viros transcendis, & quæ maledictionem Evæ in benedictionem vertissi Mariæ. O quam indecenter manus illæ sacræ, quæ nunc etiam divina revolvunt volumina. curæ muliebris obscœnitatibus deservirent ! — Ipse nos à contagiis hujus cœni, à voluptatibus hujus luti dignatus est erigere & ad seipsum vi quadam attrahere, qua percussum voluit Paulum convertere, & hoc ipso fortassis exemplo nostro, alios quoque literarum peritos ab hac deterrere præsumptione.

Ne te id igitur, soror, obsecro moveat, nec patri paterne nos corrigenti sis molesta; sed attende quod scriptum est: „ Quos diligit Deus, hos corripit. „ Castigat autem omnem filium quem recipit.” Et alibi, „ Qui parcit virgæ, odit filium.” Pœna est hæc momentanea, non æterna; purgationis, non damnationis. Audi Prophetam, & confortare: „ Non judicabit Dominus bis in id ipsum, & non „ confurget duplex tribulatio.” Attende summam illam & maximam Veritatis adhortationem: „ In „ patientia vestra possidebitis animas vestras.” Unde & Salomon: „ Melior est patiens viro forti, & qui „ dominatur animo suo, expugnatore urbium.”

Non te ad lachrymas, aut ad compunctionem movet unigenitus Dei innocens pro te & omnibus, ab impiissimis comprehensus, distractus, flagellatus, & velata facie illusus, & colaphizatus, sputis confusus, spinis coronatus, & tandem in illo crucis tunc tam ignominioso patibulo inter latrones suspen-

sus, atque illo tunc horrendo, & execrabili genere mortis interfectus? Hunc semper, soror, verum tuum & totius Ecclesiæ Sponsum præ oculis habere, mente gere. Intuere hunc exeuntem ad crucifigendum pro te & bajulantem sibi crucem. Esto de populo & mulieribus, quæ plangebant & lamentabantur eum, sicut Lucas his verbis narrat: “Sequebatur  
“ autem multitudo populi & mulierum, quæ plange-  
“ bant & lamentabantur eum.” Ad quas quidem benigne conversus, clementer eis prædixit futurum in ultionem suæ mortis exitum, à quo quidem si saperent, cavere sibi per hoc possent. “Filiæ, inquit,  
“ Hierusalem, nolite flere super me, sed super vos  
“ ipsas flete, & super filios vestros. Quoniam ecce  
“ venient dies in quibus dicent: Beatæ steriles, &  
“ ventres qui non genuerunt, & ubera quæ non  
“ lactaverunt. Tunc incipient dicere montibus,  
“ Cadite super nos; & collibus, Operite nos. Quia  
“ si in viridi ligno hæc faciunt, in arido quid fiet?”  
— Patienti sponte pro redemptione tua compatere, & super crucifixo pro te compungere. — Sepulchro ejus mente semper assiste, & cum fidelibus sæminis lamentare & luge. De quibus, etiam ut jam supra memini scriptum est, “Mulieres sedentes ad monu-  
“ mentum lamentabantur flentes Dominum.” Paracum illis sepulturæ ejus unguenta, sed meliora, spiritualia quidem, non corporalia: hæc enim requirit aromata, qui non suscepit illa. Super his toto devotionis affectu compungere. — Ad quam quidem compassionis compunctionem ipse etiam per Hieremiam fideles adhortatur dicens: “O vos omnes qui  
“ transitis per viam, attendite & videte, si est dolor  
“ similis sicut dolor meus.” Id est, si super aliquo

patiente ita est per compassionem dolendum, cum ego scilicet solus sine culpa, quod alii deliquerint, luam. Ipse autem est via, per quam fideles de exilio transeant ad patriam. — Qui etiam crucem, de qua sic clamat, ad hoc, nobis erexit scalam. Hic pro te occisus est unigenitus Dei, oblatus est, quia voluit. Super hoc uno compatiendo dolo, dolendo compatere. Et quod per Zachariam Prophetam de animabus devotis prædictum est comple: “Plangent, inquit, “ planctum, quasi super unigenitum, & dolebunt “ super eum, ut doleri solet in morte primogeniti.”

Vide, Soror, quantus sit planctus his qui Regem diligunt super morte primogeniti ejus & unigeniti. Intuere quo planctu familia, quo mœrore tota consummatur Curia, & cum ad Sponsam unigeniti mortui perveneris, intolerabiles ululatus ejus non sustinebis. — Hic tuus, Soror, planctus, hic tuus fit ululatus, quæ te huic Sponso felici copulasti matrimonio. Emitte iste non suis, sed seipso. Proprio sanguine emitte, & redemit. Quantum jus in te habeat vide, & quam preciosa sis intuere. — Hoc quidem pretium suum Apostolus attendens, & in hoc pretio quanti sit ipse, pro quo ipsum datur, perpendens, & quam tantæ gratiæ vicem referat adnectens: “ Absit mihi, “ inquit, gloriari nisi in cruce Domini nostri Jesu “ Christi, per quem mihi mundus crucifixus est, & “ ego mundo.” Major es cælo, major es mundo; cujus pretium ipse conditor mundi factus est. Quid in te, rogo, viderit, qui nullius eget, ut pro te acquirenda usque ad agonias tam horrendæ atque ignominiosæ mortis certaverit? Quid in te, inquam, quærit nisi teipsam? Verus est amicus, qui te ipsam non tua desiderat. Verus est amicus, qui pro te

moriturus dicebat. « Majorem hac dilectionem nemo  
« habet, ut animam suam ponat quis pro amicis suis.”  
Amabat te ille veraciter, non ego. Amor meus,  
qui utrumque nostrum peccatis involvebat, concupiscentia,  
non amor dicendus est. Miseras in te meas  
voluptates implebam, & hoc erat totum quod amabam.  
Pro te, inquis, passus sum, & fortassis verum est:  
sed magis per te, & hoc ipsum invitus. Non amore tui,  
sed coactione mei. Nec ad tuam salutem sed ad dolorem.  
Ille vero salubriter, ille pro te sponte passus est,  
qui passione sua omnem curat languorem,  
omnem removet passionem. In hoc, obsecro,  
non in me tua tota sit devotio, tota compassio,  
tota compunctio. Dole in tam innocentem tantæ  
crudelitatis perpetrata iniquitatem: non justam  
in me æquitatis vindictam, imo gratiam, ut dictum  
est, in utrosque summam.

Iniqua enim es, si æquitatem non amas; et iniquissima,  
si voluntati, imo tantæ gratiæ Dei scienter es adversa.  
Plange tuum reformatorem, non corruptorem;  
redemptorem, non scortatorem: pro te mortuum  
Dominum, non viventem servum, imo nunc primum  
de morte vere liberatum. — Cave obsecro ne,  
quod dixit Pompeius mœrenti Corneliæ, tibi  
improperetur turpissime. — Attende, precor, id, &  
erubescere, nisi admissas turpitudines impudentissimas  
commendes.

Accipe itaque, Soror, accipe quæso patienter.  
quæ nobis acciderunt misericorditer. Virga hæc est  
patris, non gladius persecutoris. Percutit pater, ut  
corrigat, ne feriat hostis, ut occidat. Vulnere mor-  
tem prævenit, non ingerit: immittit ferrum, ut ampu-  
tet morbum. Corpus vulnerat, & animam sanat.



Occidere debuerat, & vivificat. Immunditiam refecat, ut mundum relinquat. Punit semel, ne puniat semper. Patitur Unus ex vulnere, ut duobus parcat à morte. Duo in culpa, unus in pœna. — Id quoque tuæ infirmitati naturæ divina indulgetur miseratione, & quodam modo iuste. Quo enim naturaliter sexu infirmior eras, & fortior continentia, pœnæ minus eras obnoxia. Refero Domino in hoc gratias, qui te tunc, & à pœna liberavit, & ad coronam reservavit; & cum me una corporis mei passione semel ab omni æstu hujus concupiscentiæ, in qua una totus per immoderatam incontinentiam occupatus eram, refrigeravit, ne corruam; multas adolescentiæ tuæ majores animi passiones ex assidua carnis suggestionem, reservavit ad martyrii coronam. Quod licet te audire tædeat, & dici prohibeas: veritas tamen id loquitur manifesta. Cui enim semper est pugna, superest & corona, quia non coronabitur nisi qui legitime certaverit.

Mihi vero nulla superest corona, quia nulla subest certaminis causa. Deest materia pugnae, cui ablatum est stimulus concupiscentiæ. Aliquid tamen esse æstimo, si cum hinc nullam percipiam coronam, nonnullam tamen evitem pœnam, & dolore unius momentaneæ pœnæ multis fortassis indulgeatur æternis. Scriptum est quippe de hujus miserrimæ vitæ hominibus, imo jumentis: “Computraverunt jumenta in stercorebus suis.” — Minus quoque meritum meum minui conqueror, dum tuum crescere non diffido. Unum quippe sumus in Christo, una per legem matrimonii caro. Quicquid est tuum, mihi non arbitror alienum. Tuus autem est Christus, quia facta es sponsa ejus. Et nunc,

ut supra memini, me habes servum, quem olim agnoscebas Dominum: magis tibi tamen amore nunc spirituali conjunctum, quam timore subiectum. Unde & de tuo nobis apud ipsum patrocínio amplius confidimus: ut id obtineam ex tua quod non possum ex oratione propria. Et nunc maxime cum quotidiana periculorum, aut perturbationum instantia, nec vivere me, nec orationi finat vacare, nec illum beatissimum imitari potentem Candacis Reginae Æthiopum, qui erat super omnes gazas ejus, & de tam longinquo venerat adorare in Hierusalem. Ad quem revertentem missus est ab angelo Philippus Apostolus, ut eum converteret ad fidem: quod jam ille meruerat per orationem; vel sacrae lectionis assiduitatem. A qua quidem ut nec in via tunc vacaret, licet ditissimus & gentilis, magno divinæ dispensationis actum est beneficio, ut locus ei Scripturæ occurreret, qui opportunissimam conversionis ejus occasionem Apostolo præberet.

Ne quid vero hanc petitionem nostram impediat, vel impleri differat, orationem quoque ipsam, quam pro nobis domino supplices dicatis, componere, & dimittere tibi maturavi.

### O R A T I O.

“ Deus, qui ab ipso humanæ creationis exordio,  
 “ sæmina de costa viri formata, nuptialis copulæ  
 “ sacramentum maximum sanxisti, quique immen-  
 “ sis honoribus, vel de desponsata nascendo, vel  
 “ miracula inchoando, nuptias sublimasti, meæque  
 “ etiam fragilitatis incontinentiæ, utcumque tibi pla-  
 “ cuit, olim hoc remedium indulxisti: Ne despi-  
 “ cias ancillulæ tuæ preces, quas pro meis ipsis

“ charique mei excessibus in conspectu majestatis  
 “ tuæ supplex effundo. Ignosce, ô Benignissime,  
 “ imo Benignitas ipsa; ignosce & tantis criminibus  
 “ nostris: & ineffabilis misericordiæ tuæ multitudi-  
 “ dinem culparum nostrarum immensitas experiatur.  
 “ Puni obsecro in præsentem reos, ut parcas in fu-  
 “ turo. Puni ad horam, ne punias in æternum.  
 “ Accipe in servos virgam correctionis, non gladium  
 “ furoris. Afflige carnem, ut conserves animas.  
 “ Adsis purgator, non ultor; benignus magis quam  
 “ justus: Pater misericors, non austerus Dominus.  
 “ — Proba nos Domine & tenta, sicut de semet-  
 “ ipso rogat Propheta. Ac si aperte diceret: Prius  
 “ vires inspicere, ac secundum eas, temptationum  
 “ onera moderare. Quod & Beatus Paulus fide-  
 “ libus tuis promittens ait: Potens est enim Deus,  
 “ qui non patietur vos tentari supra id quod po-  
 “ testis, sed faciet cum tentatione etiam proven-  
 “ tum ut possitis sustinere. — Conjunxisti nos, Do-  
 “ mine, & divisisti quando placuit tibi, & quo modo  
 “ placuit. Nunc quod, Domine, misericorditer  
 “ cœpisti, misericordissime comple. Et quos à se se-  
 “ mel divisisti in mundo, perenniter tibi conjugas  
 “ in cœlo, Spes nostra, pars nostra, expectatio  
 “ nostra, consolatio nostra, Domine qui es bene-  
 “ dictus in sæcula. Amen.”

Vale in Christo, Sponsa Christi, in Christo vale,  
 & Christo vive. Amen.

## EPISTOLA III.

HELOISSÆ.

*Domino specialiter, sua singulariter.*

**N**E me forte in aliquo de inobedientia causari queas, verbis etiam immoderati doloris tuæ frenum impositum est iussionis, ut ab his mihi saltem in scribendo temperem, à quibus in sermone non tam difficile, quam impossibile est providere. — Nihil enim minus in nostra est potestate quam animus, eique magis obedire cogimur, quam imperare possumus. Unde & cum nos ejus affectiones stimulant, nemo earum subitos impulsus ita repulerit, ut non in effecta facile prorumpant, & se per verba facilius effluant, quæ promptiores animi passionum sunt notæ. Secundum quod scriptum est, “Ex abundantia cordis os loquitur.” Revocabo itaque manum à scripto, in quibus linguam à verbis temperare non valeo. Utinam sic animus dolentis parere promptus sit, quemadmodum dextra scribentis.

Aliquod tamen dolori remedium vales conferre, si non hunc omnino possis auferre. Ut enim insertum clavum alius expellit, sic cogitatio nova priorem excludit. Cum alias intentus animus priorum memoriam dimittere cogitur aut intermittere. Tanto vero amplius cogitatio quælibet animum occupat, & ab aliis deducit; quanto quod cogitatur honestius æstimatur, & quo intendimus animum magis videtur necessarium.

Omnes itaque nos Christi ancillæ, & in Christo filiæ tuæ, duo nunc à tua paternitate supplices po-



stulamus, quæ nobis admodum necessaria provide-  
mus. Quorum quidem alterum est, ut nos instruere  
velis, unde Sanctimonialium Ordo cœperit, & quæ  
nostræ sit professionis autoritas. Alterum vero est,  
ut aliquam nobis Regulam instituas, & scriptam  
dirigas, quæ sæminarum sit propria, & ex integro no-  
stræ conversationis statum habitumque describat: quod  
nondum à Patribus sanctis adum esse conspeximus.  
Cujus quidem rei defectu & indigentia nunc agitur,  
ut ad ejusdem Regulæ professionem, tam mares quam  
sæminæ in Monasteriis suscipiantur, & idem institu-  
tionis Monasticæ jugum imponitur infirmo sexui, æque  
ut forti. Unam quippe nunc Regulam Beati Bene-  
dicti apud Latinos sæminæ profitentur, æque ut  
viri. Quam sicut viris solummodo constat scriptam  
esse, ita & ab ipsis tantum impleri posse tam sub-  
jectis, pariter quam prælatis. Ut enim cætera nunc  
omittam Regulæ capitula, quid ad sæminas, quod  
de cucullis, femoralibus, & scapularibus ibi scrip-  
tum est? Quid denique ad ipsas de tunicis aut de  
laneis ad carnem indumentis; cum earum humoris  
superflui menstruæ purgationes hæc omnino refu-  
giant? Quid ad ipsas etiam, quod de Abbate sta-  
tuitur, ut ipse lectionem dicat Evangelicam, & post ip-  
sam Hymnum incipiat? Quid de mensa Abbatis seor-  
sim cum peregrinis & hospitibus constituenda: Nun-  
quid nostræ convenit religioni, ut vel nunquam  
hospitium viris præbeat, aut cum his, quos susce-  
perit viris, Abbatissa comedat? O quam facilis ad  
ruinam animarum virorum ac mulierum in unum  
cohabitatio! Maxime vero in mensa, ubi crapula  
dominatur & ebrietas, & vinum in dulcedine bibi-  
tur: in quo est luxuria.

Quod & Beatus præcavens Hieronymus, ad matrem & filiam scribens, meminit dicens: « Difficile inter « epulas servatur pudicitia.” Ipse quoque Poëta, luxuriæ turpitudinisque doctor, Libro Amatoriæ artis intitulato, quantam fornicationis occasionem convivia maxime præbeant, studiose exequitur dicens:

Vinaque cum bibulas sparsere Cupidinis alas,  
 Permanet, & capto stat gravis ille loco,  
 Tum veniunt risus: tum pauper cornua sumit:  
 Tum dolor & curæ: rugaque frontis abit.  
 Illic sæpe animos juvenum rapuere puellæ:  
 Et Venus in venis, ignis in igne furit.

Nunquid & si fæminas solas hospitio susceptas ad mensam admiserint, nullum ibi latet periculum? Certe in seducenda muliere nullum est æque facile ut lenocinium muliebre. Nec corruptæ mentis turpitudinem ita prompte cuiquam mulier committit sicut mulieri. Unde & prædictus Hieronymus maxime sæcularium accessus fæminarum vitare propositi sancti fæminas adhortatur. — Denique si viris ab hospitalitate nostra exclusis, solas admittamus fæminas, quis non videat quanta exasperatione viros offendamus, quorum beneficiis Monasteria sexus infirmi egent: maxime si eis, à quibus plus accipiunt, minus, aut omnino nihil largiri videantur?

Quod si prædictæ Regulæ tenor à nobis impleri non potest, vereor ne illud Apostoli Jacobi in nostram quoque damnationem dictum sit: « Quicumque « totam legem observaverit, offendat autem in uno, « factus est omnium reus.” Quod est dicere: De hoc ipso reus statuitur qui peragit multa: quod non implet omnia. Et transgressor legis efficitur ex uno, cujus

impletor non fuerit, nisi consummatis omnibus ejus præceptis. Quod ipse statim diligenter exponens Apostolus adjecit: "Qui enim dixit: Non mæcha-beris, dixit &, Non occides. Quod si non mæcha-beris, occidas autem, factus & transgressor legis." Ac si aperte dicat: Ideo quilibet reus sit de transgressione uniuscujuslibet præcepti, quia ipse Dominus, qui præcipit unum, præcipit & aliud. Et quodcunque legis violetur præceptum, ipse contemnitur, qui legem non in uno, sed in omnibus pariter mandatis constituit.

Ut autem præteream illa regulæ instituta, quæ penitus observare non possumus, aut sine periculo non valemus: Ubi unquam ad colligendas messes Conventus Monialium exire, vel labores agrorum habere consuevit? Aut suscipiendarum sæminarum constantiam uno anno probaverit, easque tertio perlecta regula, sicut in ipsa jubetur, instruxerit? Quid rursus stultius, quam viam ignotam, nec adhuc demonstratam aggredi? Quid præsumptuosius quam eligere ac profiteri vitam, quam nescias, aut votum facere, quod implere non queas? Sed & cum omnium virtutum discretio sit mater, & omnium bonorum mediatrix sit ratio; quis aut virtutem aut bonum censeat, quod ab istis dissentire videatur! Ipsas quippe virtutes excedentes modum atque mensuram, sicut Hieronymus asserit, inter vitia reputari convenit. Quis autem ab omni ratione ac discretione sejunctum non videat, si ad imponenda onera eorum quibus imponuntur, valitudines prius non discutiantur, ut naturæ constitutionem humana sequatur industria? Quis asinum farcina tanta, qua dignum judicat elephantem? Quis tanta pueris aut senibus, quanta viris injungat? Tanta debilibus scilicet quanta fortibus,

tanta infirmis , quanta fanis , tanta sæminis , quanta maribus ? Infiriori videlicet sexui , quanta & forti ? Quod diligenter Beatus Papa Gregorius attendens , Pastoralis sui cap. xiv. tam de admonendis , quam de præcipiendis ita distinxit : “ Aliter igitur admonendi sunt viri , atque aliter sæminæ : quia illis  
“ gravia , istis vero sunt injungenda leviora : & alios  
“ magna exerceant , istas vero levia demulcendo  
“ convertant.”

Certe & qui Monachorum Regulas scripserunt , nec solum de sæminis omnino tacuerunt , verum etiam illa statuerunt , quæ eis nullatenus convenire sciebant : satis commode innuerunt , nequaquam eodem jugo Regulæ tauri & juvencæ premendam esse cervicem , quia quos dispares natura creavit , æquari labore non convenit. Hujus autem discretionis Beatus non immemor Benedictus , tanquam omnium justorum spiritu plenus , pro qualitate hominum aut temporum , cuncta sic moderatur in Regula , ut omnia , sicut ipsemet uno concludit loco , mensurate fiant. Primo itaque ab ipso incipiens Abbate præcipit , eum ita subjectis præsidere , ut secundum unius , inquit , cujusque qualitatem vel intelligentiam ita se omnibus conformet & aptet , ut non solum detrimenta gregis sibi commissi non patiatur , verum in augmentatione boni gregis gaudeat , suamque fragilitatem semper suspectus sit , memineritque calamum quassatum non conterendum. Discernat & tempora , cogitans discretionem sancti Jacob dicentis : “ Si greges meos plus in ambulando fecero laborare , morientur cuncti una die.” Hæc ergo aliaque testimonia discretionis matris virtutum sumens , sic omnino temperet , ut & fortes sit quod cupiant , & infirmi non refugiant.



Ad hanc quidem dispensationis moderationem indulgentia pertinet puerorum, senum, & omnino debilium, Lectoris, seu Septimanariorum, coquinæ ante alios refectio, & in ipso etiam Conventu de ipsa cibi vel potus qualitate, seu quantitate, pro diversitate hominum providentia. De quibus quidem singulis ibi diligenter scriptum est. — Ipsa quoque statuta jejunii tempora pro qualitate temporis, vel quantitate laboris ita relaxat, prout naturæ postulat infirmitas.

Quid obsecro? ubi iste, qui sic ad hominum & temporum qualitatem omnia moderatur, ut ab omnibus sine murmuratione proferri queant, quæ instituuntur: Quid, inquam, de fæminis provideret, si eis quoque pariter ut viris Regulam institueret? Si enim in quibusdam Regulæ rigorem pueris, senibus, & debilibus pro ipsa naturæ debilitate vel infirmitate temperare cogitur: quid de fragili sexu provideret, cujus maxime debilis & infirma natura cognoscitur? Perpende itaque, quam longe absistat ab omni rationis discretione, ejusdem Regulæ professione tam fæminas, quam viros obligari, eademque sarcina tam debiles, quam fortes onerari. — Satis esse nostræ arbitror infirmitati, si nos ipsis Ecclesiæ Rectoribus, & qui in sacris Ordinibus constituti sunt, Clericis, tam continentiae, quam abstinentiæ virtus æquaverit. Maxime cum Veritas dicat: “Perefectus omnis erit, si sit sicut magister ejus.” Quibus etiam pro magno reputandum esset, si religiosos laicos æquiparare possemus. Quæ namq; in fortibus parva censemus, in debilibus admiramur. Et juxta illud Apostoli: “Virtus in infirmitate perficitur.”

Ne vero Laicorum religio pro parvo ducatur, qualis fuit

Abrahæ, David, Job, licet conjugatorum, Chrysfotomus in Epistola ad Hebræos, sermone 7. nobis occurrit, dicens: “Sunt multa in quibus poterit laborare, ut bestiam illam incantet. Quæ sunt ista? labores, lectiones, vigilæ. Sed quid ad nos hæc, inquit, qui non sumus Monachi? Hæc mihi dicis? Dic Paulo, cum dicit: Vigilantes in omni patientia & oratione: cum dicit, Carnis curam ne feceritis in concupiscentiis.” — Non enim hæc Monachis scribebat tantum, sed omnibus qui erant in civitatibus. Non enim sæcularis homo debet aliquid amplius habere Monacho, quam cum uxore concumbere tantum. Hic enim habet veniam, in aliis autem nequaquam: sed omnia æqualiter sicut Monachi agere debet. Nam & beatitudines, quæ à Christo dicuntur, non Monachis tantum dictæ sunt. Alioquin universus mundus peribit, & in angustum inclusit ea, quæ virtutis sunt. Et quomodo honorabiles sunt nuptiæ, quæ nobis tantum impediunt?

Ex quibus quidem verbis aperte colligitur, quod quisquis Evangelicis præceptis continentia virtutem addiderit, Monasticam perfectionem implebit. Atque utinam ad hoc nostra Religio conscendere posset, ut Evangelium impleret, non transcenderet: ne plusquam Christianæ appeteremus esse. — Hinc profecto, ni fallor, sancti decreverunt Patres, non ita nobis, sicut viris, generalem aliquam Regulam, quasi novam legem præfigere, nec magnitudine votorum nostram infirmitatem onerare, attendentes illud Apostoli: “Lex enim iram operatur. Ubi enim non est lex, nec prævaricatio.” Et iterum: “Lex autem subintravit; ut abundaret delictum.”

Idem

Idem quoque maximus continentię prædicator de infirmitatē nostrā plurimum confidens, & quasi ad secundas nuptias urgens juniores viduas: “Volo, “ inquit, juniores nubere, filios procreare, matres “ familias esse, nullam occasionem dare adversario.” Quod & Beatus Hieronymus saluberrimum esse considerans, Eustochio de improvisis fæminarum votis consulit, his verbis. “Si autem & illæ, quæ vir- “ gines sunt, ob alias tamen culpas non solvantur: “ quid fiet illis, quæ prostituerunt membra Christi, “ & mutaverunt templum Spiritus sancti in lupanar? “ Rectius fuerat homini subiisse conjugium, ambu- “ lasse per plana, quam altiora intendentem in pro- “ fundum inferni cadere.” — Quarum etiam temerariæ professioni sanctus Augustinus consulens, in libro de Continentia Viduali ad Julianum scribit his verbis: “Quæ non cœpit deliberet, quæ aggres- “ sa est perseveret. Nulla adversario detur occasio, “ nulla Christo subtrahatur oblatio.” Hinc etiam Canones nostræ infirmitati consulentes decreverunt, Diaconissam ante quadraginta annos ordinari non debere, & hoc cum diligenti probatione; cum à vigintiannis, liceat Diaconos promoveri.

Sunt in Monasteriis, qui Regulares dicuntur Canonici Beati Augustini, quandam, ut aiunt, regulam profitentes: qui se inferiores Monachis nullatenus arbitrantur: licet eos & vesci carnibus & lineis uti videamus. Quorum quidem virtutem si nostra exæquare infirmitas posset, nunquid pro minimo habendum esset? — Ut autem de omnibus cibis tutius ac lenius indulgeatur, ipse quoque natura providit, quæ majore scilicet sobrietatis virtute sexum nostrum præmunivit. Constat quippè multo

parciore sumptu, & alimonio minore, sæminas quam viros sustentari posse, nec eas tam leviter inebriari Physica protestatur. — Unde & Macrobius Theodosius Saturnaliorum Libro VII. meminit his verbis: “Aristoteles, mulieres, inquit, raro inebriantur, “crebro senes. Mulier humectissimo est corpore. “Docet hoc & levitas cutis & splendor. Docent “præcipue assiduæ purgationes superfluo exoneran- “tes corpus humore. Cum ergo epotum vinum “in tam largum ceciderit humorem, vim suam per- “dit nec facile cerebri sedem ferit, fortitudine “ejus extincta.” Item: “Muliebri corpus crebris “purgationibus, deputatum, pluribus concertum “foraminibus, ut pateat in meatus, & vias præbeat “humori in egestionis exitum confluenti. Per hæc “foramina vapor vini celeriter evanescit Contra “senibus siccum est corpus, quod probat asperitas “& squalor cutis.”

Ex his itaque perpende, quantò tutius ac justius naturæ & infirmitati nostræ cibus quislibet & potus indulgeri possit, quarum videlicet corda crapula & ebrietate gravari facile non possunt: cum ab illa nos cibi parcitas, ab ista sæminei corporis qualitas, ut dictum est, protegat. Satis nostræ esse infirmitati, & maximum imputari debet, si continenter ac sine proprietate viventes, & officiis occupatæ divinis, ipsos Ecclesiæ duces vel religiosos laicos in victu adæquemus, vel eos denique qui Regulares Canonici dicuntur, & se præcipue vitam Apostolicam sequi profitentur. — Magnæ postremò providentiæ est, his qui Deo se per votum obligant, ut minus voveant, & plus exequantur, ut aliquid semper debitis gratia superaddat. Hinc enim per



femetipsam Veritas ait: „Cum feceritis omnia quæ  
 „ præcepta sunt, dicite: Servi inutiles sumus, quæ  
 „ debuimus facere, fecimus.” Ac si aperte diceret:  
 Ideo inutiles, & quasi pro nihilo, ac sine meritis  
 reputandi, quia debitis tantum exolvendis contenti,  
 nihil ex gratia superaddidimus. — De quibus qui-  
 dem gratiis superaddendis ipse quoque Dominus  
 alibi parabolice loquens ait: „Sed, & si quid su-  
 „ pererogaveris, ego, cum rediero, reddam tibi.”

Quod quidem hoc tempore multi Monasticæ Re-  
 ligionis temerarii professores, si diligentius atten-  
 derent, & in quam professionem jurarent, animad-  
 verterent, atque ipsum Regulæ tenorem studiosè per-  
 scrutarentur: Minus per ignorantiam offenderent,  
 & per negligentiam peccarent. Nunc verbò indis-  
 crete omnes fere pariter ad Monasticam conversa-  
 tionem currentes, inordinate suscepti inordinatius  
 vivunt, & eadem facilitate, qua ignotam Regulam  
 profitentur, eam contemnentes, consuetudines quas  
 volunt, pro lege statuunt. Providendum itaque nobis  
 est. ne id oneris sæminæ præsumamus, in quo viros  
 ferè jam universos succumbere videamus, imò &  
 deficere. Senuisse jam mundum conspiciamus, ho-  
 minesque ipsos cum cæteris, quæ mundi sunt,  
 pristinum naturæ vigorem amisisse, & juxta illud Ve-  
 ritatis, ipsam charitatem non tam multorum, quàm  
 ferè omnium refriguisse. Ut jam videlicet pro qua-  
 litate hominum ipsas propter homines scriptas vel  
 mutari, vel temperare necesse sit Regulas.

Cujus quidem discretionis ipse quoque Beatus non  
 immemor Benedictus ita se Monasticæ discretionis  
 rigorem temperasse fateatur, ut descriptam à se Re-  
 gulam, comparatione priorum institutorum, non nisi

quandam honestatis institutionem, & quandam conversationis inchoationem reputet, dicens: “Regulam autem hanc descripsimus, ut hanc observantes aliquatenus vel honestatem morum, aut initium conversationis nos demonstremus habere. Cæterum ad perfectionem conversationis qui festinat, sumat doctrinam sanctorum Patrum, cujus observatio perducatur hominem ad celsitudinem perfectionis.” Item, “Quisquis ergo ad cælestem patriam festinas, hanc minimam inchoationis Regulam, adjuvante Christo, perface, & tunc deum ad majora doctrinæ virtutumque culmina, Deoprotegente, pervenies.” — Qui, (ut ipse ait) cum legamus olim Sanctos Patres uno die Psalterium explere solere, ita Psalmodiam tepidis temperavit: ut in ipsa per Hebdomadam distributione Psalmorum, minore ipsorum numero Monachi quam Clerici contenti sint.

Quid etiam tam religioni quietique Monasticæ contrarium est, quam quod luxuriæ fomentum maximè præstat & tumultus excitat, atque ipsam Dei in nobis imaginem, qua præstamus cæteris, id est rationem delet? Hoc autem vinum est, quod supra omnia victui pertinentia plurimum Scriptura damnosum asserit, & caveri admonet. De quo & maximus ille sapientum in Proverbiis meminit, dicens: “Luxuriosa res vinum, & tumultuosa ebrietas. Quicumque his delectatur, non erit sapiens. Cui vae? cuius patri vae? cui rixæ? cui foveæ? cui sine causa vulnera? cui suffusio oculorum? nonne his, qui commorantur in vino, & student calicibus epotandis? Ne intuearis vinum quando flavescit, cum splenderit in vitro color ejus? Ingreditur

“ blandè , sed in novissimo mordebit , ut Coluber ,  
 “ & sicut regulus venena diffundet. Oculi tui vi-  
 “ debunt extraneas , & cor tuum loquetur perversa.  
 “ Et eris sicut dormiens in medio mari , & quasi  
 “ sopitus gubernator , amisso clavo : & dices : Ver-  
 “ beraverunt me , sed non dolui : traxerunt me , &  
 “ ego non sensi : Quando evigilabo , & rursus vina  
 “ reperiam ? ” Item : “ Noli Regibus , ô Lamuel ,  
 “ noli Regibus dare vinum ; quia nullum secretum  
 “ est , ubi regnat ebrietas , ne forte bibant & obli-  
 “ viscantur iudiciorum , & mutent causam filiorum  
 “ pauperis . ” Et in Ecclesiastico scriptum est : “ Vinum  
 “ & mulieres apostatare faciunt sapientes , & arguunt  
 “ sensatos . ” Ipse quoque Hieronymus ad Nepotia-  
 num scribens de vita Clericorum , & quasi graviter  
 indignans , quod Sacerdotes Legis ab omni , quod  
 inebriare potest , abstinentes , nostros in hac ab-  
 stinentia superent : “ Nequaquam , inquit , vinum  
 “ redoleas , ne audias illud Philosophi : “ Hoc non  
 “ est osculum porrigere , sed vinum propinare . ”  
 Vinolentos Sacerdotes & Apostolus damnat , & Lex  
 vetus prohibet . “ Qui altario deserviunt , vinum &  
 “ ficeram non bibant . ” Sicera Hebræo sermone omnis  
 potio nuncupatur , quæ inebriare potest , sive illa  
 quæ fermento conficitur , sive pomorum succo , aut  
 favi decoquitur in dulcedinem , & herbarum potio-  
 nem , aut palmarum fructus exprimuntur in liquorem .  
 codisque frugibus aqua pinguior colatur . Quicquid  
 inebriat , & statum mentis everit , fuge similiter ut  
 vinum .

Ecce quod Regum deliciis interdicitur , Sacerdo-  
 tibus penitus denegatur , & cibus omnibus periculo-  
 sus esse constat . Ipse tamen tam spiritualis vir Bea-

tus Benedictus dispensatione quadam præsentis ætatis indulgere Monachis cogitur. “ Licet, inquit, legamus vinum Monachorum omnino non esse: sed quia nostris temporibus hoc Monachis persuaderi non potest, &c.

Legerat, ni fallor, quod in vitis Patrum scriptum est his verbis: “ Narraverunt quidam Abbati Pastori de quodam Monacho, quia non bibebat vinum, & dixiteis quia vinum Monachorum omnino non est.” Item post aliqua: Facta est aliquando celebratio Missarum in Monte Abbatis Anthonii, & inventum est ibi cenidum vini. Et extollens unus de senibus parvum vas, calicem portavit ad Abbatem Sisoï; & dedit ei. Et bibit semel & secundo, & accepit, & bibit. Obtulit ei & tertio. Sed non accepit, dicens: “ Quiesce frater, an nescis quia est Sathanas?” Et iterum de Abbate Sisoï: “ Dicit ergo Abraham discipulis ejus: Si occurritur in Sabbatho & Dominica ad Ecclesiam, & biberit tres calices, ne multum est? Et dixit senex, si non esset Sathanas, non esset multum.”

Ubi unquam, quæso, carnes à Deo damnatæ sunt vel Monachis interdictæ? Vide obsecro & attende, qua necessitate Regulam temperet in eo etiam quod periculosius est Monachis, & quod eorum non esse noverit. Quia videlicet hujus abstinentia temporibus suis Monachis jam persuaderi non poterat. — Utinam eadem dispensatione, & in hoc tempore ageretur, ut videlicet in his, quæ media boni & mali atque indifferentia dicuntur, tale temperamentum fieret; ut quod jam persuaderi non valet, professio non exigeret, mediisque omnibus sine scandalo concessis, sola interdicti peccata sufficeret; & sic



quoque in cibis, sicut in vestimentis dispensaretur, ut quod vilius comparari posset ministraretur, & per omnia necessitati, non superfluitati consuleretur.

Non enim magnopere sunt curanda quæ nos regno Dei non præparant, vel quæ nos minimè Deo commendant. Hæc verò sunt omnia quæ exterius geruntur, & æque reprobis, ut dejectis, æque hypocritis, ut religiosis communia sunt. Nihil quippe inter Judæos & Christianos ita separat, sicut exteriorum operum & interiorum discretio; præsertim cum inter filios Dei & Diaboli sola charitas discernat, quam plenitudinem legis & finem præcepti Apostolus vocat. Unde & ipse hanc operum gloriam prorsus extenuans, ut fidei præferat justitiam, Judæam alloquens dicit: “ Ubi est gloriatio tua? exclusa est. Per quam legem? factorum? Non, sed per legem fidei. Arbitramur eum hominem justificari per fidem sine operibus Legis.” Item, “ Si enim Abraham ex operibus justificatus est, habet gloriam, sed non apud Deum. Quid enim dicit scriptura? Credit Abraham Deo, & reputatum est ei ad justitiam,” Et rursus: “ Ei, inquit, qui non operatur, credenti autem in Deum qui justificat impium, deputatur fides ejus ad justitiam, secundum propositum gratiæ Dei.” — Idem etiam omnium ciborum esum Christianis indulgens, & ab his ea quæ justificant, distinguens, “ Non est, inquit, regnum Dei esca & potus, sed justitia & pax, & gaudium in Spiritu sancto.” Omnia quidem munda sunt, sed malum est homini, qui per offendiculum manducat. Bonum est non manducare carnem, & non bibere vinum, neque in quo frater tuus offendatur, aut scandalizetur, aut infirmetur. Non enim

hoc loco ulla cibi comestio interdicatur, sed comestionis offensio : qua videlicet quidam ex conversis Judæis scandalizabantur, cum viderent ea quoque comedi quæ lex interdixerat. Quod quidem scandalum Apostolus etiam Petrus cupiens evitare, graviter ab ipso est objurgatus, & salubriter correctus. Sicut ipsemet Paulus ad Galatas scribens, commemorat, — Qui rursus Corinthiis scribens : “ Esca  
 “ autem nos non commendat Deo.” Et rursus,  
 “ Omne quod in macello vānit, manducate. Do-  
 “ mini est terra & plenitudo ejus.” Et ad Collosenses : “ Nemo ergo vos judicet in cibo aut in potu.” Et post aliqua : “ Si mortui estis cum Christo ab ele-  
 “ mentis hujus mundi : quid adhuc tanquam viven-  
 “ tes in mundo decernitis ? Ne tetigeritis neque  
 “ gustaveritis, neque contredaveritis : quæ sunt om-  
 “ nia in interitu ipso usu secundum præcepta & doc-  
 “ trinas hominum.” — Elementa hujus mundi vocat prima Legis rudimenta, secundum carnales observantias, in quarum videlicet doctrina quasi in addiscendis literalibus elementis primò se mundus, id est, carnalis adhuc populus exercebat. Ab his quidem elementis, id est, carnalibus observantiis tam Christi, quàm sui, mortui sunt ; cum nihil his debeant, jam non in hoc mundo viventes, hoc est inter carnales figuris intendentes, & decernentes, id est distinguentes quosdam cibos, vel quolibet res ab aliis, atque ita dicentes : “ Ne tetigeritis hæc  
 “ vel illa.” Quæ scilicet tacta, vel gustata, vel contredata, inquit Apostolus, sunt in interitu animæ ipso suo usu, quo videlicet ipsis ad aliquam etiam urimur humilitatem : secundum, inquam, præceptum & doctrinas hominum, id est carnalium, &

legem carnaliter intelligentium, potius quam Christi vel suorum.

Hic enim cum ad prædicandum ipsos destinaret Apostolos, ubi magis ipsi ab omnibus scandalis providendum erat, omnium tamen ciborum esum eis ita indulgit, ut apud quoscunque suscipiantur hospitio, ita, sicut illi victitent, edentes scilicet & bibentes quæ apud illos sunt. Ab hac profecto Dominica suæque disciplina illos recessuros ipse jam Paulus per Spiritum providebat. De quibus ad Timotheum scribit dicens: " Spiritus autem manifestè  
" dicit, quia in novissimis temporibus discedent qui-  
" dam à fide, attendentes spiritibus erroris, & doc-  
" trinis dæmoniorum in hypocrisi loquentium men-  
" dacium, prohibentium nubere, abstinere à cibis,  
" quos Deus creavit ad percipiendum cum gratia-  
" rum actione fidelibus, & his qui cognoverunt ve-  
" ritatem; quia omnis creatura Dei bona, & nihil  
" rejiciendum quod cum gratiarum actione percipi-  
" tur. Sanctificatur enim per verbum Dei & ora-  
" tionem. Hæc proponens fratribus, bonus eris  
" minister Christi Jesu, enutritus verbis fidei, &  
" bonæ doctrinæ, quam affecutus es."

Quis denique Joannem, ejusque discipulos abstinentia nimia se macerantes ipsi Christo ejusque discipulis in Religione non præferat, si corporalem oculum ad exterioris abstinentiæ intendat exhibitionem? De quo etiam ipsi discipuli Joannis adversus Christum, & suos murmurantes, tanquam adhuc in exterioribus Judaizantes, ipsum interrogaverunt Dominum, dicentes: " Quare nos & Pharisei jeju-  
" namus frequenter, discipuli autem tui non jeju-  
" nant?" — Quod diligenter attendens beatus Au-

gulinus, & quid inter virtutem & virtutis exhibitionem referat attendens, ita quæ sunt exterius pensat, ut nihil meritis superaddant opera. Ait quippe sic in Libro de bono conjugali: "Continentia, non  
" corporis, sed animæ virtus est. Virtutes autem ani-  
" mi aliquando in corpore manifestantur, aliquando in  
" habitu: sicut Martyrum virtus apparuit in tolerando  
" passiones." Item. "Jam enim erat in Job patien-  
" tia, quam noverat Dominus, et cui testimonium  
" perhibebat, sed hominibus innotuit tentationis  
" examine." Item: "Verum, ut apertiùs intelli-  
" gatur, quomodo sit virtus in habitu: etiam si non  
" sit in opere, loquor de exemplo, de quo nullus  
" dubitat Catholicorum. Dominus Jesus quod in  
" veritate carnis esurierit, & sitierit, & manduca-  
" verit, & biberit, nullus ambigit eorum qui ex  
" ejus Evangelio fideles sunt. Num igitur non erat  
" in illo continentia virtus à cibo & potu, quanta  
" erat in Joanne Baptista? Venit enim Joannes non  
" manducans & bibens, & dixerunt: Dæmonium  
" habet. Venit filius hominis manducans & bi-  
" bens, & dixerunt: Ecce homo vorax, & potator  
" vini, amicus Publicanorum & Peccatorum." Item:  
" Deinde ibi subjecit, cum de Joanne ac de se  
" illa dixisset: Justificata est Sapiencia à filiis suis,  
" qui virtutem continentia vident in habitu animi  
" semper esse debere: in opere autem, pro rerum  
" ac temporum opportunitate, manifestari, sicut vir-  
" tus patientia Sanctorum Martyrum." Quocirca,  
sicut non est impar meritum patientia in Petro, qui  
passus est, & in Joanne qui passus non est: sic non  
est impar meritum continentia in Joanne, qui nul-  
las expertus est nuptias; & in Abraham, qui filios



generavit. Et illius enim Cælibatus, & illius Conubium, pro distributione temporum, Christo militaverunt. Sed continentiam Joannes & in opere, Abraham vero in solo habitu habebat.

Illo itaque tempore cùm & lex dies Patriarcharum subsequens maledictum dixit, qui non excitaret semen in Israël: & qui non poterat, non promebat, sed tamen habebat. Ex quo autem venit plenitudo temporis ut diceretur, “qui potest capere capiat;” “qui habet, operetur, qui operari noluerit, non se habere mentiatur.” Ex his liquidè verbis colligitur solas, apud Deum merita virtutes obtinere, & quicumque virtutibus pares sunt, quantumcumque dissent operibus, æqualiter ab ipso promereri. Unde quicumque sunt verè Christiani, sic toti circa interiorem hominem sunt occupati, ut eum scilicet virtutibus ornent, ac vitiis mudent: ut de exteriori nullam, vel minimam assumant curam. — Unde & ipsos legimus Apostolos ita rusticanè, & velut inhonestè, in ipso etiam Domini comitatu se habuisse, ut velut omnis reverentiæ atque honestatis obliti, cùm per fata transirent spicas vellere, fabricare, & comedere, more puerorum, non erubescerent. Nec de ipsa etiam manuum ablutione, cùm cibos essent accepturi, sollicitos esse. Qui cùm à nonnullis, quasi de immunditia, arguerentur, eos Dominus excusans: “Non lotis, inquit, manibus manducare, non coinquinat hominem.” Ubi & statim generaliter adjecit, ex nullis exterioribus animam inquinari: sed ex his tantum quæ de corde prodeunt, “Quæ sunt, inquit, cogitationes, adulteria, homicidia,” &c. Nisi enim prius prava voluntate animus corrumpatur, peccatum esse non poterit

quicquid exteriùs agatur in corpore. Unde & bene ipsa quoque adulteria sive homicidia ex corde procedere dicit, quæ & sine tactu corporum perpetrantur, juxta illud: “ Qui viderit mulierem ad concupiscendam eam, jam mœchatus est in corde suo. “ Et omnis qui odit fratrem suum, homicida est.” Et tactis vel læsis corporibus minimè peraguntur, quando videlicet per violentiam opprimitur aliqua, vel per justitiam coactus judex interficit reum. “ Omnis quippe homicida (sicut scriptum est) non “ habet partem in regno Dei.”

Non itaque magnoperè quæ fiunt, sed quo animo fiant, pensandum est, si illi placere studemus, qui cordis & renum probator est, & in abscondito videt, qui judicabit occulta hominum. “ Paulus, inquit, “ secundum Evangelium meum,” hoc est, secundum meæ prædicationis doctrinam. Unde & modica viduæ oblatio, quæ fuit duo minuta, id est quadrans, omnium divitum oblationibus copiosis prælata est, ab illo cui dicitur: “ Bonorum meorum non eges,” cui magis oblatio ex offerente, quam offerens placet ex oblatione, sicut scriptum est: “ Respexit Dominus ad Abel, & ad munera ejus.” Ut videlicet priùs devotionem offerentis inspiceret, & sic ex ipso donum oblatum gratum haberet. Quæ quidem animi devotio tanto major in Deo habetur, quanto in exterioribus, quæ fiunt, minus confidimus. — Unde & Apostolus post communem ciborum indulgentiam, de qua, ut supra meminimus, Timotheo scribit, de exercitio quoque corporalis laboris adjunxit, dicens: “ Exerce autem te ipsum ad pietatem. Nam corporalis exercitatio admodum utilis “ est. Pietas autem ad omnia utilis est, promissionem

“ habens vitæ quæ nunc est, & futuræ : quoniam  
 “ pia mentis in Deum devotio, & hic ab ipso me-  
 “ retur necessaria, & in futuro perpetua.”

Quibus quidem documentis quid aliud docemur,  
 quam Christianè sapere, & cum Jacob de domesticis  
 animalibus refectiorem patri providere? Non cum  
 Esau de silvestribus curam sumere, & in exteriori-  
 bus Judaizare. Hinc & illud est Psalmistæ: “ In  
 “ me sunt Deus vota tua, quæ reddam laudationes  
 “ tibi.” Ad hoc quoque illud adjunge Poeticum.

Ne te quæſiveris extra.

Multa sunt & innumerabilia tam Sæcularium, quam  
 Ecclesiasticorum Doctorum testimonia, quibus ea quæ  
 sunt exterius, & indifferentia vocantur, non mag-  
 nopere curanda esse docemur. Alioquin legis opera,  
 & servitutis ejus, sicut ait Petrus, importabile jugum,  
 Evangelicæ libertati esset præferendum, & suavi  
 jugo Christi, & ejus oneri levi. Ad quod quidem  
 suave jugum & onus leve per semetipsum Christus  
 nos invitans: “ Venite, inquit, qui laboratis &  
 “ onerati estis.” Unde & prædictus Apostolus quos-  
 dam jam ad Christum conversos, sed adhuc opera  
 legis retinere censentes vehementer objurgans, sicut  
 in Actibus Apostolorum scriptum est, ait: “ Viri  
 “ fratres, quid tentatis Deum, imponere jugum  
 “ super cervicem discipulorum, quod neque patres  
 “ nostri, neque nos portare potuimus: sed per  
 “ gratiam Domini Jesu credimus salvari, quemad-  
 “ modum & illi?”

Et tu ipse, obsecro, non solum Christi, verum  
 etiam hujus imitator Apostoli, discretionem sicut  
 & nomine, sic operum præcepta moderare, ut

infirmis convenit naturæ , & ut divinæ laudis plurimum vacare possimus officiis. Quam quidem hostiam , exterioribus omnibus sacrificiis reprobatis , Dominus commendans ait ; “ Si esuriero , non dicam tibi : meus est enim orbis terræ , & plenitudo ejus. Nunquid manducabo carnes taurorum , aut sanguinem hircorum potabo ? Immola Deo sacrificium laudis , & redde Altissimo vota tua , & invoca me in die tribulationis , & eruiam te , & honorificabis me.”

Nec id quidem ita loquimur , ut laborem operum corporalium respuamus , cum necessitas postulaverit. Sed ne ista magna putemus , quæ corpori servantur , & officii divini celebrationem præpediunt ; præsertim cum ex autoritate Apostolica id præcipuè devotis indultum sit sæminis , ut alienæ procurationis sustententur officiis magis , quam de opere proprii laboris. Unde ad Timotheum Paulus : “ Si quis fidelis habet viduas , subministret illis , & non gravetur Ecclesia , ut his , quæ veræ viduæ sunt , sufficiat.” — Veras quippè viduas dicit quascunque Christo devotas , quibus non solum maritus mortuus est , verum & mundus crucifixus est , & ipsæ mundo. Quas rectè de dispendiis Ecclesiæ , tanquam de propriis Sponsi sui redditibus , sustentari convenit. Unde & Dominus ipse matri suæ procuratorem Apostolum , potius quam virum ejus prævidit . & Apostoli septem Diaconos , id est Ecclesiæ ministros , qui devotis ministrarent sæminis , instituerunt.

Scimus quidem & Apostolum Thessalonicensibus scribentem , quosdam otiose vel curiosè viventes adeo constrinxisse , ut præciperet , quoniam si quis



non vult operari, non manducet: & Beatum Benedictum maximè pro otiositate vitanda opera manuum injunxisse. Sed nunquid Maria otiosè sedebat, ut verba Christi audiret? Martha tam ei quam Domino laborante, & de quiete sororis tanquam invida murmurante, quasi quæ sola pondus diei & æstus portaverit?

Unde & hodie frequenter murmurare eos cernimus, qui in exterioribus laborant, cum his qui divinis occupati sunt officiis terrena ministrant. Et sæpe de his, quæ tyranni rapiunt, minus conquerruntur, quam quæ desidiosis (ut aiunt) istis & otiosis exsolvere coguntur. Quos tamen non solum verba Christi audire, verum etiam in his assidue legendis & decantandis occupatos considerant esse. Nec attendunt non esse magnum, ut ait Apostolus, si eis communicent corporalia, à quibus expectant spiritualia. Nec indignum esse, ut qui terrenis intendunt, his, qui spiritualibus occupantur, deserviant. Hinc & enim ex ipsa quoque legis sanctione Ministris Ecclesiæ hæc salubris otii libertas concessa, ut tribus Levi nihil hæreditatis terrenæ perciperet, quo expeditius Domino deserviret: sed de labore aliorum decimas & oblationes susciperet.

De abstinentia quoque jejuniorum, quam magis vitiorum quam ciborum Christiani appetunt, si quid Ecclesiæ institutioni superaddi decreveris, deliberandum est, & quod nobis expedit, instituendum. — Maximè vero de officiis Ecclesiasticis, & de ordinatione Psalmorum providendum est: ut in hoc saltem, si placet, nostram exoneres infirmitatem: ne cum Psalterium per hebdomadam expleamus, eodem necesse sit Psalmos repeti. Quam etiam Beatus Benedictus, cum eam pro visu suo distribuisset,

in aliorum quoque actione sua id reliquit admonitio : ut si cui melius videretur , aliter ipsos ordinaret. Attendens videlicet , quod per temporum successionem Ecclesiæ decor creverit , & quæ prius rude susceperat fundamentum , postmodum ædificii nata est ornamentum. — Illud autem præ omnibus definire te volumus , quid de Evangelica lectione in vigiliis nocturnis nobis agendum sit. Periculosum quippe videtur eo tempore ad nos Sacerdotes aut Diaconos admitti , per quos hæc lectio recitetur , quas præcipuè ab omni hominum accessu atque aspectu segregatas esse convenit : tum ut sincerius Deo vacare possimus , tum etiam ut à tentatione tutiores simus.

Tibi nunc domine , dum vivis , incumbit insinuare de nobis , quid in perpetuum tenendum sit nobis. Tu quippè post Deum , hujus loci fundator , tu per Deum nostræ congregationis es plantator , tu cum Deo nostræ sis religionis institutor. Præceptorem alium post te fortassis habituræ sumus , & qui super alienum aliquid ædificet fundamentum. Ideoque veremur de nobis minus futurus sollicitus , vel à nobis minus audiendus , & qui denique , si æquè velit , non æquè possit. Loquere tu nobis , & audiemus. Vale.

F I N I S.



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